COLLECTING AS A PASTIME

CHARLES ROWED

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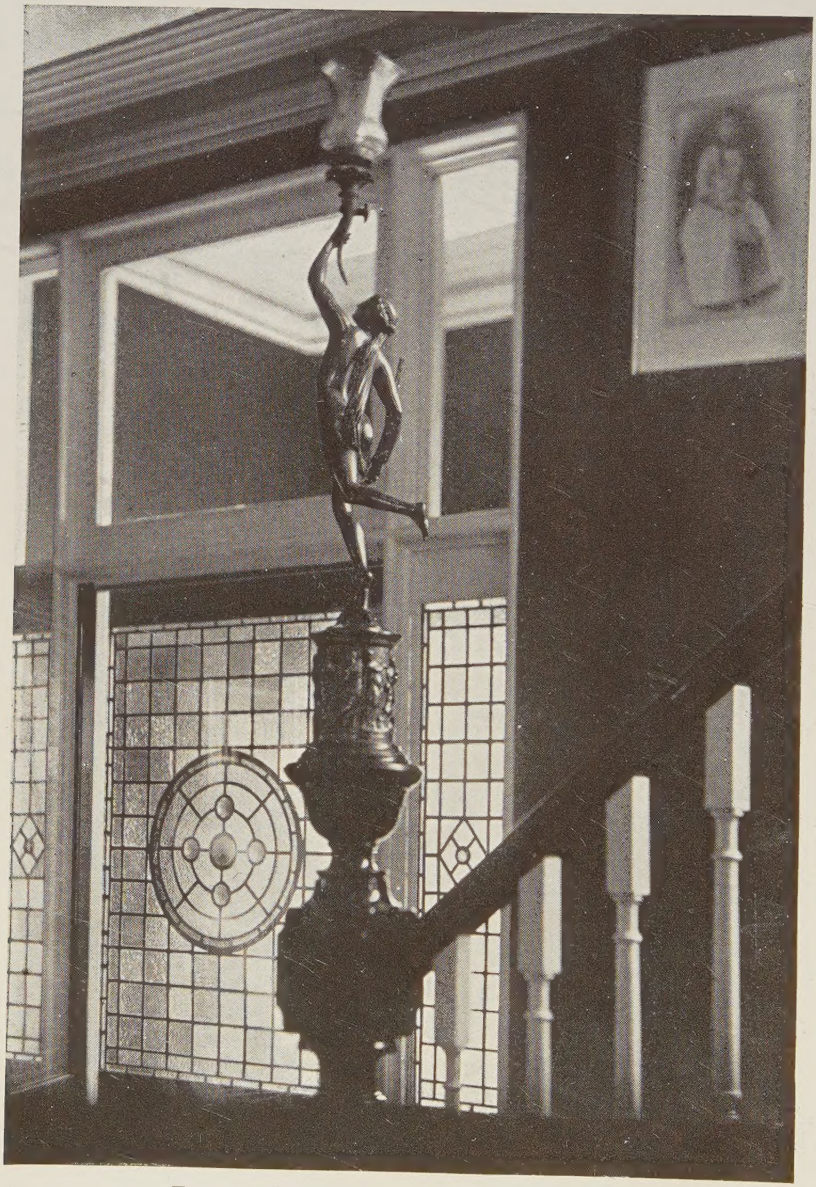

Bronze Statuette for Gas. *Circa* 1850.

PLATE I.

COLLECTING AS A PASTIME

BY
CHARLES ROWED

With 68 Half-tone Illustrations

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TO THE MEMORY
OF
C. H. R.

RAISON D'ÊTRE

This book is written, and the illustrations prepared, mainly to inspire, inform and amuse Amateur Collectors. In this I trust it will be successful, but I further hope that it may arrest the attention and stimulate the interest of many other readers.

The Author.

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COLLECTING AS A PASTIME

REFLECTIONS

THERE is a cause for everything. Are antique collectors born or are they made? Is the craze inherent, or do circumstances or environment create the craving? How in later life do early associations influence our peculiar fancies? Possibly my seven years as a choir-boy at Winchester Cathedral attending services and practices there fifteen times weekly, being boarded at the Bishop's Palace, and playing games under the shadow of the ruins of Wolvesey Castle may have laid impressions which tended to render me susceptible to the mediæval. My reflections bring to mind my singing at the enthronement of Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, and seeing the bones of King Rufus taken out of his tomb and laid in skeleton form on the floor of the chancel. In those times a man was not considered too old at forty, as the Dean was doing his little bit at ninety. To go back still farther, when quite a small boy I lay for weeks with a broken leg, which had to be broken a second time owing to poor setting, in a room out of which there was a secret chamber for hiding those "wanted" in the good old days. This ancient home with its pointed gables and windows was suitably named "Gothic Lodge," and is near Southampton, close to a house in which Lord Jellicoe's grandfather resided.

Anyone knowing Winchester will be familiar with the

picture of " The Trusty Servant," and illustrative of the extraordinary things a collector may come across in his rambles, I found a good print of this in a nice old maple frame hanging in a dark shop of a dingy street in a drab town in the North of England, and, of course, I purchased it (Plate II, facing p. 14).

* * * * *

The rostrum shook under the thud of the fist of the reformed prizefighter, and the hall reverberated with his stentorian exclamation. " Ah-h-h-h, my friends, what will the drunkard do for drink ? " Allow me just to whisper, " What won't the collector do for curios ? " It is generally understood that there is honesty among thieves. This may be so—not being a member of that fraternity I cannot vouch for its accuracy. That this desirable attribute prevails amongst the majority of antique dealers and collectors is to my mind open to question. You know you cannot do yourself justice unless you know more than the other fellow, while he in his turn, if you are a stranger, treats you with suspicion, and so you both play Brer Rabbit.

I was once going through a collection acquired by a professional gentleman, and he called my special attention to a very good figure of Nelson, which he informed me he had obtained at a bargain price. The figure was in a shop run by an alien, probably now a naturalised Englishman, who asked fifteen shillings for it. On its being pointed out that the figure only possessed one arm the alien said he had not noticed that and dropped the price to eighteenpence. I suppose, after all, this question of honesty resolves itself into a matter of con-

science, and we must realise that this is a commodity liable to degrees of elasticity which can be regulated without a great deal of effort to suit the demand requisite for the occasion.

* * * * *

Did you ever know a collector give away anything from his special line? I once had a little Leeds Pottery cottage (impressed mark) pressingly offered me out of pure good will by a dealer, who although he was only half a collector was a whole-hearted Christian, and I wish he were still in the flesh to read this fond reference to his genial urbanity, but he has gone aloft.

Open confession is good for the soul, and I feel at this point I must unburden my conscience after alluding to others whose feelings may have been disturbed by my theories. On one occasion a very old and valued friend was giving a charity bazaar at his residence, so he asked me to contribute some of my old pewter. My friend and I had much in common, but he little knew what he was asking of me then or with what pangs of heart-burning those twenty pieces were selected, packed, and forwarded, with a lying letter expressing the pleasure I felt.

* * * * *

One other outstanding instance of generosity comes vividly to my mind. Early on, when I could talk of nothing but old pewter, I spent an afternoon with a friend who still resides in a hamlet, the name of which I Aughton't to disclose. He specialises in old porcelain and young pullets, together with rare bits and roses. At the time I was almost in despair because I could drop on no pewter dishes. Imagine my delight when I received

anonymously three good marked specimens from the residential district aforesaid. On meeting the donor and overwhelming him with my profusion of gratitude, he remarked, "Look here, old man, you needn't make such a fuss about it. The fact is my wife came across these dishes when spring cleaning, and she asked me to get them out of the way, so I sent the bally things off to you."

* * * * *

I have alluded to the influence the collecting craze may have on the conscience, and on the gift of charity. The bump denoting the latter varies very considerably in individuals, as in some cases it is reported to be undiscernible by the most gifted phrenologist, yet we each think our own so abnormally developed that we wonder how we keep our hats on. As an instance of the way in which the mania may take hold of the common sense contained in a brain occupied with big undertakings, and large financial questions, let me give you an instance.

At a shop on Blackpool Pier I noticed an oak pulley-block partly gilded, and learnt it had belonged to the rigging of the *Foudroyant*, which was wrecked there in 1897. Although I did not want this myself I knew a friend who would like to have it. He was very keen on Nelson relics, and had shown me with pride the room he devoted specially to the display of these, which he had accumulated regardless of cost. I purchased the block for a guinea, packed it up, sent it off to the South of England by passenger train, and wrote saying what I had done. What gigantic schemes matured or what h.p. pressure was required to keep his powerful brain under control, I do not know, but in the evening of the following day I

received an urgent telegram saying the pulley-block had not yet arrived, and would I trace it forward? Now why could not a man of his experience and resource have waited more than twelve hours after getting my letter for a thing like that to come 250 miles by train, without giving me extra trouble, when I had already put myself out of the way to give him a little pleasure? I forgave him when I received his note of thanks, and he never met me afterwards without referring to my thoughtfulness on his behalf.

* * * * *

Soon after I started I had the advantage of comparing notes with a medical friend, who had a decided penchant for antiques, and he diagnosed collecting as a disease on which he considered himself an authority, if not a specialist, as his knowledge had been acquired by constant practice. His faculties were so acute that on one occasion while feeling the pulse of a patient he lost count of the beats through catching sight of a Bartolozzi print hanging near the bed. He was pleased to say the patient recovered her health, and he obtained the Bartolozzi.

Further evidence in support of this theory is the case of a minister who, after seeing my collection for the first time, could not sleep, but lay awake wondering in which of the houses in his parish he had seen any pewter. May I not carry this a step further without giving offence, by suggesting that when thoughts require to be concentrated on less worldly things, while paying his consoling visits he should spend much of the time with both eyelids closed? Be this as it may, he has secured a number of bargains.

Another instance came under my notice through seeing a letter from a wealthy merchant, the ramifications of whose business are world-wide, in which he stated he had been poking about slums, and had picked up two pepper-pots for a few coppers. Consequently he could not see his way to offer more than three shillings for two which had been advertised for four shillings.

* * * * *

I have discovered among my press cuttings an article which appeared in the *Times*, August 12, 1910, and I should like you to read the following extract :—

ON COLLECTORS

" The collector's instinct seems to be a curious by-product of the human mind ; and not only of the human mind, for magpies, monkeys, and even dogs, sometimes have it. When a dog makes a store of bones, old and entirely fleshless, he is like the collector who keeps obsolete things just because they are obsolete. A used postage stamp is to a man what a bone without flesh is to a dog ; but the collector of postage stamps goes further than the dog, in that he prefers an old postage stamp to a new one, while no dog, however ardent a collector of bones without flesh, would not rather have a bone with flesh on it. Yet there is more method in the human collector, since he always has before him the ideal of a complete collection, whereas no dog, probably, ever dreamed of acquiring specimens of all the different kinds of bones there are in the world. This ideal of a complete collection is the usual spur of the human collector ; and often he will collect the most out-of-the-way things in the hope of attaining it. But there is also the spur of rivalry, and because of that there are not many collectors of things that no one else collects. Every collector likes to have at least one rival whom he

may out-do, and from whom perhaps he may steal ; for the collector's instinct is sometimes too strong for the most honest of men, so that they come to regard stealing as only a bold and skilful kind of collecting. They would never steal anything except what they collect ; but in stealing a fine specimen they are only rectifying the iniquity of chance which has given that specimen to an ignoramus who does not deserve it. For them collecting is a game, and stealing is not a breach of the rules. Indeed, there is only one breach of the rules, viz :—forging. But even forgeries make collecting more exciting ; and perhaps they are not really a breach of the rules, but only an added complication in the game, a new kind of bunker, so to speak, which tests the skill of the player."

Great minds think alike ! Oh, thank you !

* * * * *

In my numerous calls I have only once been openly treated with suspicion, and that happened in a county town which boasts of an imposing jail. Possibly the existence of that massive pile with its undesirable inmates had given cause to the local antique dealer to be ever doubtful of his visitors. My friend and I had left the motor at the hotel, found a small shop crowded with antiques, opened the door, which was of the stable pattern in two sections, and walked in. After a few minutes, during which we were examining curios, and making audible comments, the proprietor came out of the back, and demanded to know how we got in.

" Through the door."

" Yes, but why didn't you ring the bell ? "

" Perhaps the bell is out of order."

" No, that won't wash, I know your sort."

He was irate, so we left him in possession. My friend was very indignant, and was not appeased when I hinted that the unpleasant incident would not have occurred if I had been by myself.

* * * * *

I do not envy those who go to auction rooms or large antique premises, buy a cart-load in one afternoon, write out a cheque, and have the goods kecked at the door like a load of coal. I have always been pleased that I started and have kept on buying my finds in penny numbers, and now I am able to put them in volume form I am well rewarded for my persistence.

Like the lady who never made her tea the right strength, because she had a poor eye for measuring distances, I attempt no estimate of the miles I have travelled in pursuit of the game. I have motored as far north as Dunbar with success, made discoveries in Dover, found dishes in Devonshire, turned up treasures when touring the Lakes, and been over to Ireland for pewter. Reflections on these journeys are constantly arising as my eye lights on one or other of the numerous specimens which adorn my home, and I am truly thankful that I turned my attention to the collecting of antiques in the way I have done, thereby providing myself with a pastime which has been beneficial to the body and mind of a busy man.

In my narration I hope I may not cause the reader to conclude that I am egotistical, desirous of creating the impression that I know it all, make no mistakes, and pick up nothing but bargains. I must plead guilty of

having on more than one occasion when homeward bound thrown rotten purchases out of the train, taking care, of course, not to hit any resting man working on the line. There have been times when on closer scrutiny I have discovered an " antique " purchase to be modern, and I have turned it over to the hazards of everyday use, feeling sure that its existence among the household effects would not remain in evidence for a lengthy period to remind me of my lack of acumen.

By giving some of my experiences the amateur who, like myself, has essayed to go cautiously will, I feel, enter into the spirit which has pervaded my search after antiques to get what enjoyment there was to be obtained in pursuit of the elusive bargain. An ounce of practice is worth a ton of theory, and a few mistakes are the best school for the student.

I hope in the contents evidence of originality may occur, and that the touches of humour may not be considered misplaced, even by those who take their collecting very seriously. I have the good fortune to number among my friends one who for half an ordinary lifetime has been so keen a collector of antiques that he has gathered together a host of treasures which have not only filled his house from ground floor to garret, but have partly stocked the local museum as well. He must have read nearly everything published on his beloved subjects, and when he heard I had decided to write this book, in an encouraging letter he said, " I shall, I know, be very much interested. I love to read a ' spicy ' article. I always think it sinks deeper than the heavy and often cumbersome accounts we sometimes get."

I have not enquired just what my friend's definition of the word " spicy " may mean, but as he knows half my pleasure in collecting is the fun of the thing, and that it is my natural bent to find humour whenever it chances to come my way, I trust he will not be disappointed with the result of my efforts to enliven what he might otherwise have considered another addition to heavy material.

I hope the illustrations will give satisfaction. Long before I started collecting I was possessed of a good half-plate camera, with a fine lens, which I used out in the open on any occasion as I felt disposed, consequently this experience came in most useful when I desired to photograph specimens of my collection indoors. I have therefore not only the satisfaction of knowing that all the subjects exhibited have been gathered together by my initial effort, and are all under my own roof, but that I have taken most of the photographs myself. The result of taking all these on half-plates has allowed me to keep uniformity running through the book, and enabled me to present the pictures the right way up. The arrangement in so many volumes which compels each reader to twist the book every time he wishes to study a picture, will be found practically absent in this. As the smartly set up autocratic adjutant commands his regulars " Right-turn " and " Left-turn " so does the short-sighted conservative author compel his readers to " Read-turn " and " Lift-turn."

I take no credit for the developing, printing, or toning of the photographs, for I have a detestation of shutting myself in the dark room, and a dislike for the tedium of the remaining part of the process. By

arranging a set of shelves for the groups, and fixing the camera at the most suitable distance I have maintained the same proportion of size throughout, a point which should be borne in mind as one which has saved the necessity of giving more than a few measurements. The times of exposure for the photographs have varied from two minutes to two hours.

Collecting, therefore, has livened up my photography; and it is fresh in my mind that photography has livened me up on two occasions while I have been on this work. The first when, after hanging about for twenty minutes while a "grandfather" was reflecting his face, I found I had omitted to take the cap off the camera. Secondly, when another "grandfather" was supposed to be undergoing the required operation, I discovered after the lapse of a similar period, which seemed to be about double the time, that I had forgotten to pull up the slide, and this happened just when the necessary light for that day had finished. Such incidents as these are by the way, but the linking up of photography with the still life that is depicted is a further justification for the title "Collecting as a Pastime."

FIRST COURSE

Grandfather Clocks and Old Furniture

The First Plunge—The Clock and the Chest— Varsity Blue—The Statuette—A Weird Arrival—Faked Chairs—*Foudroyant* Oak—More Clocks—Study the Chart—Making Converts — Lacquer Clocks — Barometers — The Elusive Mercury — Welsh Dressers—Chinese Chippendale Chair—Spinning Wheel — Spindle-backed Chairs — More rushed Seats—Gate-legged Mahogany Table—Buying Worm-holes —Bureau and Bookcase—A Revelation—Oak Cupboard—Four Corner Cupboards—Dated Furniture—Mahogany Inlaid Tables—A Surprise—Chests of Drawers : Small, large, and a Combination—Just in Time—Bureau—How not to Auction —The Tea-caddy.

" THE oak tree was an acorn once," and so was the case of my first grandfather clock. Quite by chance in 1902, I noticed in a shop window a brass dial bearing the inscription " John Burgess de Wigan," with well-engraved numerals, and fitted with quaintly cut brass hands. On enquiry I was told they had a case for it, and this was found propped up, for its feet were groggy. As 17s. was the price asked for the lot, I plunged. To my amazement an old clockmaker soon had the works going and he assured me they would see me out, but I have some anxiety about the original wrought iron hinges, which I compute will have swung, back and to, nearly 90,000 times.

The minstrel (Moore and Burgess) sang that " the grandfather clock was too tall for the shelf, so it stood ninety years on the floor." My old gentleman had

evidently been in more confined space than this one they made such a song about, and as the owner could not bend its back he knocked off the feet. I fitted him out with new understandings made of very old timber, which suited him down to the ground. When the case was renovated the venerable timekeeper was placed in my hall, where he has ticked away regularly except on those days when his rope has not been wound up, or when a new rope was necessary. I found, by starting a correspondence in the *Wigan Observer*, that Burgess was one of the earliest clock-makers in Wigan, and that my clock was made about 1690.

The first long-case pendulum clock was made by Thomas Tompion in 1681 and the prefix "de" to names was dropped about 1700, so it would be interesting to know how many clocks are still in existence bearing the "de" in front of the surname. I have had clocks offered to me said to be 300 or 400 years old, while one man thought his would be at least 500; when I stated that I had read in my clock book that 240 years was the limit he disdainfully brushed that opinion aside with the remark, "Oh, books! Do you believe all you read?"

This was the antique seed that has spread from hall to room, and from room to room, until there is no room for more. Strange to say, within a week I had found a companion to "old Burgess" in the form of a very ancient oak Ecclesiastical chest, bearing four locks without wards, but with each key-hole a different shape; the keys to correspond would be in the hands of the parson, two wardens and sexton respectively (*See* Plate VIII). The clock and the chest have stood *vis-à-vis*

since their introduction, and if the regularity of the former and the complacency of the latter had been emulated by the occupants of the house, what a model home they would adorn !

It is believed that on one occasion " old Burgess " forgot to strike, for which he may be forgiven. On the newel post there is fixed a fine old bronze female figure, bearing a light, and on the occasion of a young cleric spending the night with us this statuette was found draped in a Varsity blue wrap (the owner of which has since served as an Army Chaplain throughout the War)—truly a sight to set any decorous time-server off his balance ! (Plate 1.)

This model of the female form divine deserves an artistic treatment, to which I do not feel competent to do justice, but I opine the modeller, L. V. E. Robert, who was doing his level best about sixty years ago, intended it to be a representation of " Summer," or " Hygeia," and that he was proud to impress his name thereon. It stood for years in a mansion, and was turned out into the cold when the premises were altered on changing owners, so I then found it a home.

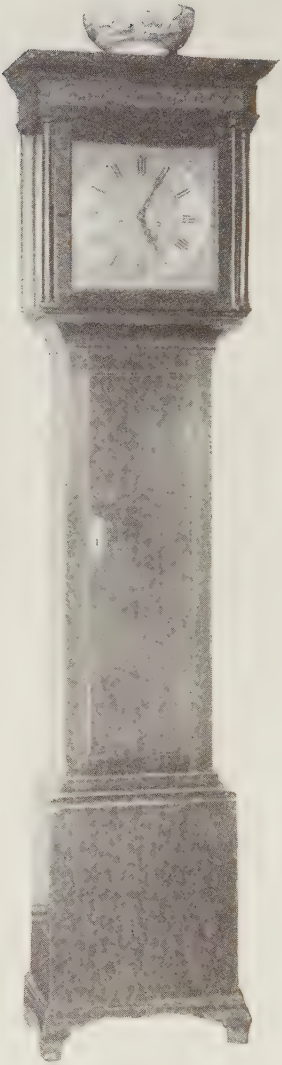
I was very proud of " old Burgess " (and am still) and, of course, called the attention of all our visitors and the piano-tuner thereto. This musical fiend struck a discordant note when he piped out, " I see it's only a 30-hour. I have one that belonged to my wife's great-aunt and it has an eight-day movement, which is so much more convenient." There are some people who seldom do, and never say, the right thing. That set me on looking for an eight-day grandfather, and I looked in vain, and for fear

"The Trusty Servant" (Print, *circa* 1830).

PLATE II.

John Burgess,
de Wigan,
1690.

Philip Smith,
Barton,
1700.



Phillips,
Ludlow,
1710.

PLATE III.

I might strain my sight I confided my absolute requirement to a friend who knocked about the country, and he assured me at once he could soon fix me up, " but what price will you go to ? " As I wished to give him as little trouble as possible I said, " Oh, I'm not particular, say fifty shillings." One morning not long after this the commissionaire announced in my office that two gentlemen wanted to see me in the hall—a marble hall, mark you !—and here I found my friend looking very worried, with a man who touched his forelock, but to whom I was not introduced. They had with them something that bore resemblance to a coffin with a dirty shroud, the latter having apparently twisted itself round the former, a state of packing that no estimable undertaker would undertake. They then proceeded to unshroud and prop up the outer shell, which had three sides and a bit.

" The case is the nearest match I could get to your thirty-hour ; and the dial and works are in the box there."

" But where is the back ? "

" I can't exactly say ; some is on the Birmingham platform, some at Stafford where I changed, there is quite a lot on the platform here, and I noticed pieces kept falling off as I followed this man wheeling it from the station ; but whoever looks at the back of a clock ? You can easily fit in another without anybody being the wiser."

I then saw the dial and works, and found I was face to face with Grandfather Philip Smith of Barton, which Barton I cannot say, but probably near Nottingham. I did my best for him, and he has done his best for me,

so I am recompensed for the expense I was put to in renewing his youth.

* * * * *

"Sergeant, just sweep up that dust in the hall."

"Yes, sir."

* * * * *

I now received a welcome gift of two high-backed Lancashire Cromwellian black oak chairs from a revered friend, who was wishful to encourage my new craze, and very useful and instructive these have been. I say instructive, for they had not been in the shadow of "old Burgess" long before I compared the grain of their oak and his, with the result that while the panel in the back and front leg spindle of one was finely carved, and the oak undoubtedly 17th century, in the other they were as modern as the frames. I may here mention for the benefit of any reader who does not know that old oak furniture is seldom black with age, and that the polisher can stain it any shade preferred, that when Nelson's flagship, the *Foudroyant*, built in 1797, was wrecked at Blackpool in 1897, much of her oak was made into furniture, and some fine chairs quite light in colour may be seen at the Hotel Metropole there. I have a black gate-legged table made from *Foudroyant* oak which is an exact replica of a good Cromwellian design with twisted legs, and which was quite light in colour until it was stained (Plates x and xi).

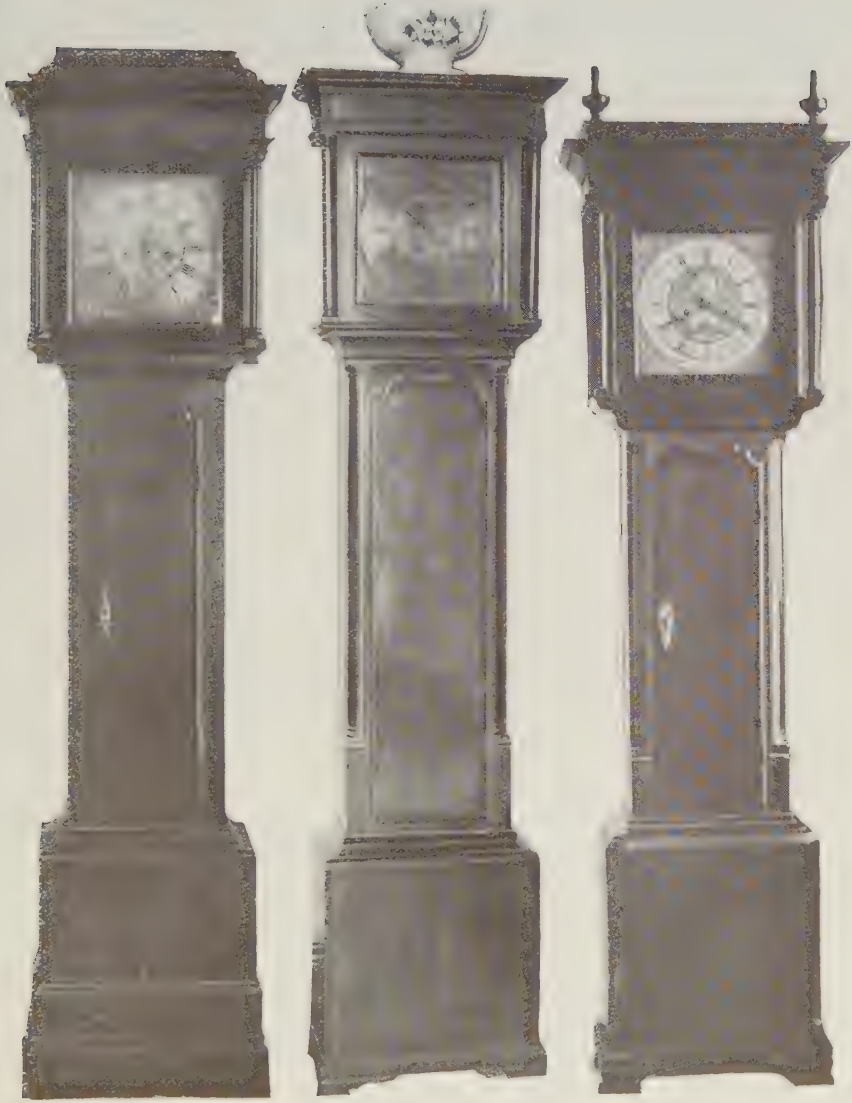
I now had another oak grandfather clock with a brass dial offered me, and although it had a thirty-hour movement I did not hesitate to pay the price asked. It had

come from Ormskirk, where it was made by T. Helm about 1770, as in the Constable's book of accounts for that year there is an entry " paid Thos. Helm for taking care of clock." It stood for a hundred years in a farm opposite my house, and I got it from descendants of its original owners, so for sentimental reasons I would not part with it, even at an advance on the first cost. This clock originally was worked by a rope, but a chain was substituted before I became its possessor. I have other things to talk of than grandfather clocks, but three were not enough for me. I have from time to time provided room for others, and for the last few years have found nine none too many, as seven of them need winding only once a week. They do not all strike at once, for a few have been deprived of their capacity for music-making, by having the striking weight taken off.

By the aid of the photographs and with the following particulars the reader has a fair illustration of the evolution of the external part of grandfather clocks extending over one hundred years. I believe the dates I estimate are not far off the mark, and I hope some readers may be enabled to set their minds at rest if they have been in doubt as to the age of their own grandfather.

Maker	Height	Width of Body	Dial	Special Features
John Burgess de Wigan	6′ 11″	12½″	11½″	Oak ; square edged body, hand cut heavy brass hands, quaint fret, iron strap hinges.— Circa 1690.
Philip Smith Barton	6′ 8½″	12½″	12″	Oak ; square edged body ; artistic fret, early brass hinges. — Circa 1700.

Maker	Height	Width of Body	Dial	Special Features
Phillips Ludlow	6′ 9″	12½″	12″	Oak; square edged body; carved "fret."—Circa 1710.
Pennington Ince	6′ 11″	13″	12″	Oak; square edged body, fluted oak pillars to head which is fitted with side lights; pollard oak bands to doors and panel; carved "fret."—Circa 1720.
T. Helm Ormskirk	6′ 11″	13½″	12″	Oak; door and panel banded with mahogany, rounded oak pilasters; painted "fret" design.—Circa 1760.
Bold Warrington	7′ 4½″	14″	12″	Oak; heavy case with oak back, mahogany band to doors with rounded mahogany pilasters, deeply cut well engraved dial; no "fret."—Circa 1760.
Brown Liverpool	7′ 10″	15″	13″	Mahogany; "Chippendale," fitted with side lights to hood, rounded pilasters.—Circa 1770.
Monks Prescott	7′ 10″	16″	14″	Mahogany; "Chippendale," fluted pillars and pilasters.—Circa 1780. Dial bears the legend: "As the time goes swift away, So does human life decay."
No name Enamelled dial	7′ 11″	18″	14″	Mahogany; "Sheraton," fluted pillars and pilasters, satinwood inlay.—Circa 1790.



Pennington,
Ince,
1720.

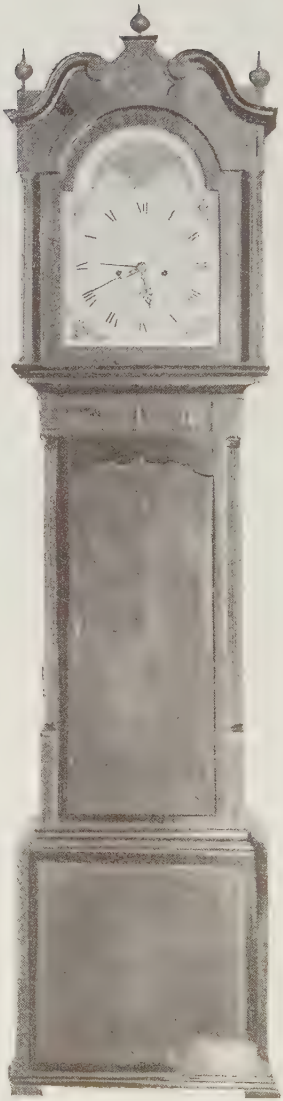
T. Helm,
Ormskirk,
1760.

Bold,
Warrington,
1760.

PLATE IV.

Brown,
Liverpool,
1770.

Monks,
Prescott,
1780.



No name. (Enamelled Dial)
1790.

PLATE V.

So far as I know the nine clocks are genuine. I could find no trace of any material repair before I got them, and I have been most careful in the renovating which was necessary with some of them. I ought to explain in regard to "Phillips" that I fell in love with him in an auctioneer's stock-room because his style seemed just to agree with my oak dresser and I bought him, although he was fitted with a 30-hour movement which was quite worn out. Having obtained the works of an old eight-days by buying a white dial in a case I cared nothing about, I had two holes drilled in "Phillips'" face and so converted him. It was a simple thing to do, as the centre of the dial is matted without engraving and the centres could be made anywhere to correspond with the requirements of the winding arrangements. This is an example of what may happen to old clocks when in the dealer's hands. I have been in places where a number of old grandfathers have been in stock, and changing a good dial which would suit a better case was considered quite the proper thing to do, but consequently the grandfather would in future bear a wrong cognomen, while the case might be quite of a different date from that indicated by the maker's name.

"Former Clock and Watch Makers," by Britten, was my text-book for this department, and I must have given my friends the impression that I was an authority on horology, for on reflecting I find I purchased, selected, or had a hand in the choosing of about thirty grandfather clocks. Narrow cases and brass dials were my usual stipulations.

LACQUER CLOCKS

Lacquer clocks have increased greatly in value recently on account of their scarcity. About twelve years ago I had one offered me for £4 10s., but as I did not admire it, and had no idea where I could get the needed repairs executed, I left it alone. I have just seen one sold by a dealer to a dealer for £37. On my last visit to see a collector and dealer, whom I respect for his straightforward dealing, I found he had parted with his lacquer clock, which I had seen in his room for many years, and was told a dealer had tempted him to sell it for £50, and that he now realised he had practically given it away at this price.

BAROMETERS

Having provided for reliable time-keeping, my next requirement seemed to be something experienced in ruling the weather. I found my first antique barometer hanging outside a tall warehouse, when out cycling with a friend. This emporium was a three-storeyed building, filled with all kinds of "rubbish," valuable and otherwise. While my friend studied the old books I poked about and made my first purchase of old china and old pewter, but these will be dealt with on other pages. I made further visits to this building, which now forms a portion of the offices of a very large soap works, and think if I had known anything about old engravings I might have found something worth while. I feel sure there were many fine works hanging promiscuously on the walls, for they comprised some of the ugliest and most weird things in pictures I have come across.

That barometer has been a tried and trusted indicator, and I was so pleased with its usefulness that I thought it would be a good idea to get another, and fix it in the precincts of the kitchen, so that the laundress might know the right time to hang out the clothes. Having bought another of the good old type, and having found just the place for it, I next gave careful instructions to the female mind which had to cope with the laundry department as to the reading and the adjusting of the indicator, so that the fine drying days could be intelligently anticipated, and I figured out the saving of coal effected would soon pay the modest cost of the barometer many times over, but the affairs of men and mice and charladies aft gang agley. I was not long in noticing that barometer No. 2 did not work in accord with No. 1, and I worried about it, in fact at the time of writing I am still worrying about it. There is a cause for everything, and when things go wrong it is necessary to find out the reason before they can be put right, and when the discovery is made you can fix the blame where any may exist. Imagine the shock I experienced one day when I found that the maid had been in the habit of taking the instrument down, and laying it flat on the table to give it a good polishing. Where the mercury slipped to is a mystery, but I must admit that I never gave her warning that an antique barometer when charged must be kept perpendicular. The instrument went to be refilled with mercury soon after the War started, and has not been returned to me yet !

DRESSERS, CHAIRS, ETC.

The next antique furniture I desired was an oak dresser to show off the pewter which had been accumulating, and I was fortunate in obtaining one, which originally had come from Wales, without delay. The oak proved to be elm, but I bought it without first seeing it, and I have been pleased that it turned out as it did. The inverted pediments are of holly and the doors work on pins. To get the dresser out of the farm where it had played its part for generations, the farm door jambs had to be removed, so I was informed, but it just fitted my hall, which was all that really mattered.

Another dresser was reported to me as having come from Wales, and I bought it from a Mr. Jones, and although I had not seen this until it came to me, it was good old oak sure enough. I believe the elm-made dates from early in the seventeenth century, and the oak one about fifty years after.

These old dressers were complete, but one had a portion of the back decayed, probably through standing for years against damp walls, so an obliging builder let me have some boards sawn from an oak beam he had taken out of an ancient Quakers' meeting-house, and I was able to maintain the true character and charm of these time-worn stagers.

The Chinese Chippendale chair (Plate x) deserves special notice, for was it not my initial find in mahogany? Its home was in a building the walls of which were feet thick, and in generations past had formed part of a monastery, but which to-day is linked up with a more

modern dwelling built of the same Scotch grey stone. It was in this house, near Dalkeith, while we were having a family holiday in the summer of 1906, and just when my soul was awakening to the mysteries of antiques, that I came across this relic. It stood in the room we occupied in the ancient part of the building, and was completely disguised by a covering of chintz, hiding strong canvas stitched over much padding. After lifting its skirt, peculiarly shaped legs were revealed, and my curiosity was aroused. Removing the chintz cover, by ripping off the canvas, and taking out about a sackful of wool, I was not only struck by the unique back, but astounded to find the original pig-skin upholstery in good condition. One mahogany arm was missing, and a very rough hard wood substitute had been fitted in its place. I was presented with the chair on the spot. A handy man from the village fetched " a wee bit o' auld mahogany bed stock he had just sawed off to mak anither haundle for the chair." I got him to make a case to hold it, and the " wee bit bed stock," together with a spinning-wheel, and consigned it for home to await my arrival. I learnt " there was anither chair like it awa doon at Melville Castle."

The spinning-wheel just mentioned was noticed by my wife when making a purchase of wool in a shop on Causewayside at Edinburgh, and she was told, " my mon had brocht it wi' him on his last journey from Yell " (the most northern of the Shetland Isles), and although it was not for sale she " didna mind parting wi' it, as she could aye git anither yen when her mon gaid for mair wool."

When wanting more chairs I noticed a set of spindle-

PLATE VI

OAK DRESSER

DESCRIBING THE PEWTER

Bottom Shelf. Pair of Tea Caddies. Cake Stand. Oval Dish with fancy edge. Wash Bowl.

First Shelf. Vinegar Bottle. Handle-less half-pint Measure. Lipped half-pint Measure. Flour Dredger.

Second Shelf. Two lipped quart Measures (one by Watts and Harton, London, 1800). Strainer.

Top Shelf. Set of seven Irish (haystack) Measures, by Austin, Cork, from 1 gal. to ½ noggin. Set of seven English Measures (Georgian), from ½ gal. to ½ gill. The gallon Irish haystack Measure is 12 inches high. The largest plate 18 inches, and the smaller ones are from 9 inches to 10 inches in diameter.

Oak Dresser, Welsh, 17th Century, with Pewter

PLATE VI.

Elm Dresser, Welsh, Early 17th Century, with Pewter.

PLATE VII.

PLATE VII

ELM DRESSER

DESCRIBING THE PEWTER

Bottom Shelf. Swiss Bottle. Hot-water Dish by T. Compton. Ladles by Ashberry and Coleman. Flask, 7½ inches, with screw-in cap.

First Shelf. Barber's Pot. Milk Mug. Quaich. Moustache Mug. Hot-water Jug.

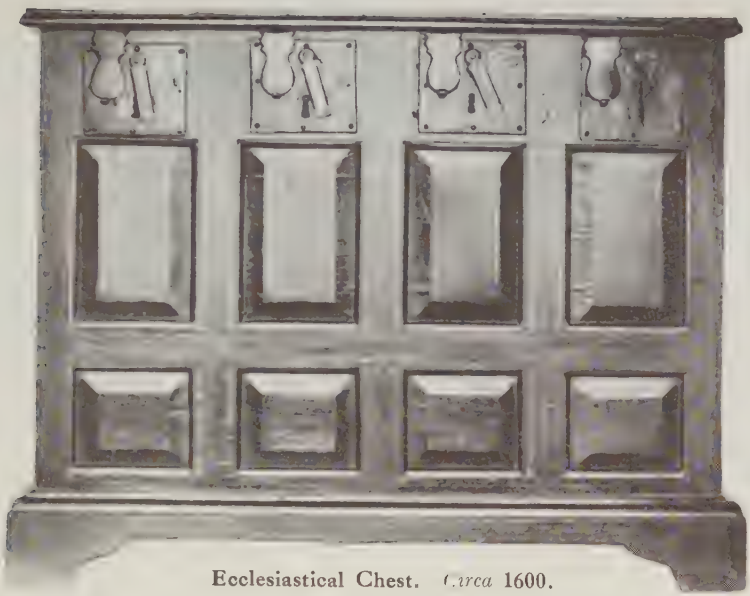
Second Shelf. Early Quart. Hot-water Plates by John Home (1760) and Henry Little (1755). Milk Jug (sold as a pilgrim's bottle). Mulled Ale Jug.

Third Shelf. Plates 13½ inches in diameter.

Top Shelf. Chinese Tea Caddy. Jug 7 inches high. Blue-and-white Pottery Tureen by Burton, Hanley. Plates 15 inches, 16½ inches, 18 inches in diameter.

back rushed seats with pony feet, and on enquiry was told they had " one arm and six ordinary." Ere learning the price I was asked, " How many do you want ? " The idea of splitting a set of chairs over a hundred years old, and in perfect condition ! Yet this is an indication of the value placed on this type fifteen years ago, while to-day dealers are scouring the country-side to make up sets. I gleaned that these were made by the grandfather of our local house furnisher ; he (the grandfather) had six sons, and kept a farm, also a wheelwright's shop in the country ; that the chairs were made in the dark evenings for a few shillings each, so I got them at about their original price ; that the wood used was oak from an adjoining park, and after dressing it was stained mahogany in a bath, that the spindles were driven home with the wheelwright's hammer, and that " Uncle Richard was the finest rusher in Lancashire." This is undoubtedly true, for there is not a spindle loose or a rush out of place. (Plate IX)

After buying the spindle-backs, on the same day and in the same street I visited another broker's shop, but let me direct you in case you wish to call there any time. It is situated either higher up or lower down, according to which end of the street you enter by, but if you come out of a by-street you must be careful to turn either to the right or left, and keep straight on, for if you cross over and go ahead you will be up another street. Should you be walking you will keep to the right, but in case you drive or motor you must mind and keep to the left. Trams pass the door, and if you take the one going to Liverpool you will not get anywhere near it. It is situated on the opposite side facing a shop that has been " To Let "



Ecclesiastical Chest. *Circa* 1600.

Oak Dower Chest, Dated 1702.

Oak Spindle Back Chairs, Early 19th Century.

Birch Chairs, Early 19th Century.

PLATE IX.

but is now occupied by a tradesman who has done well out of the war. By the by, if you happen to come in the evening, and take the North Star as your guide you will no doubt find the place—shut up. Readers can take so much more interest in a story when they have been made familiar with the locality, and especially in a case like this where the actual house has been pointed out. I entered the shop—do you follow me ? I examined a birch chair with a broken arm, an artistic back, fluted legs, and a rush seat. While I am ruminating, the broker comes out of his parlour, leaving the door open, and I see other chairs of the same pattern, which are evidently in every-day use. I remark on them, and am invited to inspect. Having done so I enquire, " Will you sell them ? " and am answered thus—" Will I sell 'um, I'll sell you every old thing I've got." I did not buy every old thing he'd got, but I secured the set of chairs, two arm and six ordinary, and when re-polished the figuring of the birch looked well. I also relieved him of a mahogany pedestal circular mirror, which I " could have for seven bob, as he was tired of seeing the thing about." (Plate ix)

MAHOGANY GATE-LEGGED TABLE

My having over-stocked the house that day has kept me off buying higher class chairs, but one never knows what may happen. Quite recently I bought a gate-legged Spanish mahogany square ended table. I found it most unexpectedly the first day we decided we wanted such a thing, and it happened to be just the size desired. After a brief examination without going on my knees I told them to deliver it, and when it arrived legs upper-

most I thought, " what a lot of worm holes for the money." I said nothing aloud. Having 'phoned for a cabinet-maker, and after he had laid the table top downwards he dropped on his knees, and looking up with an expression of mingled pity and contempt for my credulity enquired :

" Have you bought it ? "

" Yes."

" And paid for it ? "

" Yes."

" May I ask how much ? "

" Eight pounds."

" I've bought tables like this for 35s."

" Yes, some time ago."

At this stage I fancy he thought he had put my wind up, for he hedged by consoling me with the remark " I saw a table like this fetch £11 10s. at a sale, and it had worm holes too."

Now take warning by this, and be sure you look out for worm holes, but don't be over anxious to buy more than you can count, and if you should, then do not pay much extra for them. Further, if you find these pests getting busy in any of your furniture procure a solution of corrosive sublimate of suitable strength and saturate the parts affected, but as the chemical is a deadly poison it is advisable to use a long handled brush and not dab it on with the fingers.

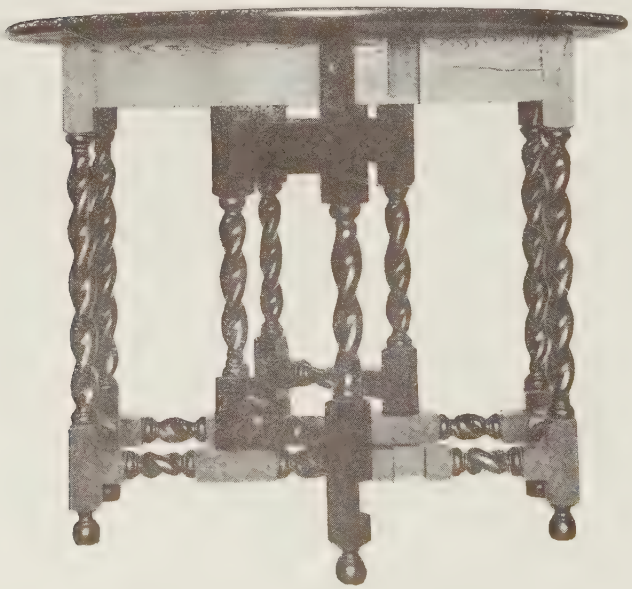
I thank you for your sympathy, but am delighted with my bargain, as the frame only needed the inside soft wood to be replaced, and the table with its fine Spanish wood top supported by well-fluted legs makes a

Chinese Chippendale Chair, Late 18th Century.

Oak Lancashire Chairs (Faked).

PLATE X.

Cromwellian Gate-leg Table (Oak). Knife-box (Shell inlay).
Salt-box, 1659. Bowl, by Copeland.



Gate-leg Table, made of *Foudroyant* Oak.

PLATE XI.

handsome, convenient, and useful centrepiece, for dining purposes, and can be folded and put aside any time.

The tables shown on Plate XIV are very good late eighteenth century examples. The one with drop ends is mahogany, has a striking shell-like satinwood ornamentation let in the middle, and inverted crocus inlaid legs. The table with the folding legs was in a very dirty condition when I purchased it, and was called mahogany, and it was not until it was scraped that I became aware it was made of birch, thickly veneered with rosewood, and richly inlaid with satinwood. Oh, what a prize surprise.

BUREAUX AND CABINETS

When China began to come in, I bought a fine mahogany inlaid bureau and book-case in Cheshire at about one-third of the cost of such a piece if you could find it to-day. On examining the secret fittings I found in pencil in quite old style handwriting on the bottom of one of the drawers some lines headed, " Over the door of a House of Pleasure at W/Church." Unfortunately I cannot give the context, as I fear it would not pass the Press Censorship. When the bureau was cleaned and re-polished I protected this precious indication that a previous possessor was rather a sly old boy, and so I retain this unique evidence of age. (Plate XII)

When I commenced to write this book I found it quite impossible to get along with a rather modern light oak desk and I felt sure an old bureau would be of great assistance in carrying inspirations relating to antiques, and further that one must be obtained promptly. If you

write a few hundred pages and have them typewritten in triplicate it is advisable to have somewhere to keep them, for it would be poor satisfaction to learn some morning that a few score had served the useful purpose of lighting the kitchen fire. The roomy drawers of a bureau answer admirably and find accommodation for the photographs as well. (Plate XIII)

My first enquiry was made of a dealer I will call A, who informed me that bureaux were very scarce, but as he attended most sales he would be on the look out and do his best. I then went to another dealer and told him of my intention, and asked him would he sell my flat-top oak desk? Certainly he would, there was a mahogany bureau to be sold at a sale the very next day and he would buy it for me if I would give him a commission. I said, " Very well I will slip over in the morning, look at it and let you know." I disturbed the auctioneer feeding his poultry, and cajoled him to come to the house, which I had found locked up. The bureau looked very weary, but I knew it could soon be put right, so I posted back to B and told him to buy it, using his own judgment about the price. In the evening B called and said he had bought the bureau, but the price was more than expected as that chap A had run him up the last £2. Then it dawned on me that I had been bidding against myself.

I may here mention I have never attended sales and that this is the only antique illustrated in this volume which has been bought at a sale on my behalf.

" There was an old woman who lived in a shoe " who was greatly perplexed as to how to accommodate so many children. I can sympathise with her, for having so much

Bureau with Bookcase (Mahogany). *Circa* 1790.

PLATE XII.

Mahogany Bureau, 18th Century.

Chest of Drawers with Bureau Fitment.

PLATE XIII.

pewter and being anxious to show it off I was much worried " and didn't know what to do." I hunted about and advertised for an oak cupboard with glass doors but could find nothing suitable so I bought the chest shown. Then I had the cupboard made from oak taken out of a farm built in 1633 near St. Helens which had been pulled down, while the top decoration is some of the original wainscoting from Argoed Hall, Oswestry, which I had by me, and it came in suitably for the frieze. The top of the chest being in two pieces the cupboard just fits on the hind portion while the front half lifts off, and so I am enabled to stow a lot of extra pewter in the chest. (Plate XVII)

Pewter plates and blue and white dishes needing to be displayed, I had shelves fitted in my morning and dining rooms. To provide for the china I purchased the cabinet shown in Plate XXXVIII, and in a short time found four corner cupboards. It might take as many years to find a lot to equal these, which are mahogany made and all nicely inlaid. I bought them from the same broker who astonished me by saying, "I am a collector too—of sovereigns."

DATED FURNITURE

Dated furniture is hard to find. I only have two specimens, of which photographs are given. The initials on the oak chest will be the initials of the first owner and his wife, but whether this dating may be evidence of a dower chest on their marriage, or whatever happened to them in 1702, there is no question about the chest being Queen Anne period. (Plate VIII)

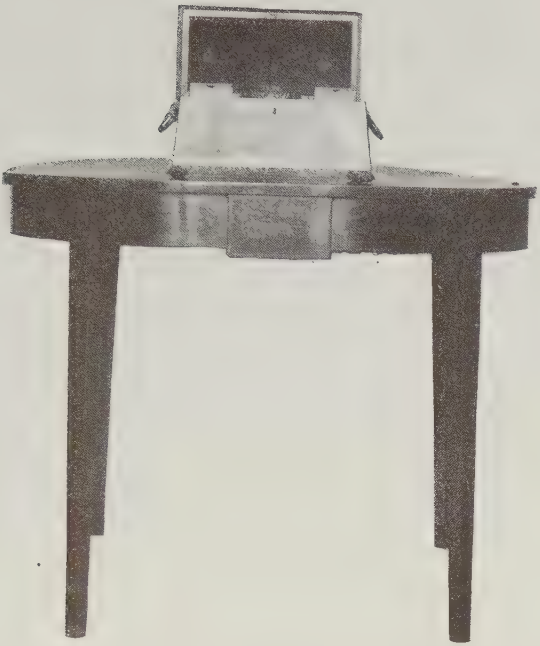
As regards the salt box, the carved piece of oak which bears the date 1659 has a much older appearance than the rest of the box, although that is ancient timber. Probably the seventeenth century article fell to pieces about a hundred years ago, when the owners would have this one put together. This shows how easy it may be for the amateur to be misled as to the age of a faked article in which an early date has been worked. I found it in a shop on the North Pier at Blackpool, and was informed it was bought at an old farm sale near Preston. (Plate XI)

MAHOGANY CHESTS OF DRAWERS

When I bought the dwarf chest shown on Plate XVI, it was fitted with black wooden knobs which could not have been on many years. On examination, marks were sufficiently clear to enable me to judge to a nicety the design of the brass plates the original handles would drop on to ; so I had five cut, and looked up some old handles and fasteners. Then I was able to give the chest its original appearance.

The large chest shown on Plate XV really is a beautiful piece of furniture, complete with its imposing brass ring handles, original and perfect in every way just as I bought it. The workmanship is of high class, and the long secret drawer at the top has made a good hiding place for a large number of amulets. The drawers are in smooth running condition, and the oak linings are a fine example of good work, while the mahogany cannot be beaten. It came from the sign of "Uncle will oblige."

The chest with bureau fitment on Plate XIII is, I believe, a very rare specimen ; it has one small and



Birch, Veneered Rosewood, Folding Table (Satinwood Inlay).
Tea Caddy (Rosewood).

Mahogany Table (Satin-wood Inlay, Drop Ends).

PLATE XIV.

Mahogany Chest of Drawers (Satinwood Inlay).

Dishes : Davenport, Leeds, Copeland.
Bowls : Bow, Chelsea, Plymouth, Bow.

PLATE XV.

three large drawers, and is provided with a pull-out drawer, fitted to answer the purpose of a bureau. I was passing along a street in a busy town when I saw this standing on the pavement. Out of curiosity I pulled open the right hand top drawer, and immediately I realised what happened, enquired the price. "Five pounds; Mr. Smith is after it." I paid the money without hesitation, as the chest was in fine preservation. Mr. Smith came after it about five minutes after it had been fetched away in the cart which I had sent after it about five minutes after I had walked back, it having taken me about five minutes to accomplish this; and so Mr. Smith was left "in the cart." Moral—Go snap on a bargain.

TEA CADDY

I must apologise for having omitted to introduce a dear old friend earlier but I cannot let you complete this course without making her acquaintance. Her well preserved appearance coated with a rosewood overall, the rings she carries at her sides and her dainty claw feet must claim your notice. She has no hesitation in allowing you at any time to admire her tight fitting combinations which contain her black and green teas. I have lifted her covering to reveal her velvet lining which has stood the wear, without a tear, for more years than you will credit her with. With what tender care she has nurtured her Waterford Glass Sugar bowl now raised with her fittings for your inspection. She has never lost sight of her little Sheffield Plate spoon which has caddied for her on every occasion when her numerous admirers

needed the cup which soothes. Taking all her good qualities into consideration we must pardon her desire to have her photo taken too. (Plate XIV)

I appear to have touched on nearly all the Furniture objects I have found it convenient to photograph indoors, and as I am not stocktaking or compiling a catalogue we will pass on to the second course.

Dwarf Chest of Drawers with Hepplewhite Mirror,
2 ft. 6 in. high, 2 ft. 3 in. wide.

PLATE XVI.

Oak Chest with Oak Cupboard (*see p* 31).

PLATE XVII.

SECOND COURSE

Old Pewter

The First Pint—Progress—The Total—Congratulation—My Irish Friend—Sacks Full—Mistaken Identity—A Warm Time—Marks—Excise Stamping—First Act, 1826—Candlesticks—Church Pewter—The Basin—Faked Pewter—Plates and Dishes—Irish and Scotch—Tappit Hens—Whisky Stoups—Britannia Metal Enquiry — Cleaning — The Tinsmith—The " Odamifino "—The Pewter Pot—The Mystery Piece.

THERE is an old axiom that " a man is no good unless he has a hobby," but some of my friends say I have been no use since I took up the collection of old pewter. Many may wonder what induced a busy man to go to the trouble of getting together a collection like that shown in the photographs. It all arose through my rummaging in a broker's while waiting for a friend who was looking for old books, and finding a mug which was dirty and black with neglect but inscribed, " Canteen, 70th Regiment." My curiosity was aroused, and I became the owner. On submitting this to a tinsmith it was pronounced to be old pewter, and from the time it was polished, fifteen years ago, I have been on the look out for more. The experience I soon gained taught me that the collectors of old pewter mainly belonged to that class with whom money is little object, and that what they strived to obtain were very old, unique pieces, communion vessels and historical specimens, quite out of the reach of an ordinary house-

holder. This I recognised when visiting an exhibition of Old Pewter at Clifford's Inn Hall in 1908.

It must be patent to any reader that if those were the only articles of interest that were worth securing for exhibition purposes then the rest of the old stuff occasionally turning up might as well go to the melting pot for solder, the fate of so many tons in years gone by, and even now men in ignorance of the antique value of old pewter are daily melting specimens which would be fit to decorate many a shelf. I have given much attention to British pewter ; the old associations appeal to my imagination, and I have never been drawn to foreign specimens.

If you suffer from a good memory you will recall that Wolsey said to Cromwell, " Take an inventory of all I possess." Now if he had as many pieces in such variety of any one line as I have of old pewter, then Wolsey was giving Cromwell something to do, and as pewter was knocking about in those days he may have had a fair collection. I cannot pretend to describe many of my pieces, but I present the reader with a selection of photographs, and I hope these will, to a certain extent, speak for themselves ; anyway they give a good idea of the effect a large collection of pewter has on the home, and on the patience of those who attend to the dusting. Space has not permitted me actually to show in my rooms or have in the house more than 500 pieces, but I have, as opportunity occurred, kept on improving the specimens on view, and I could best do this by letting the stuff come in whenever I heard of any likely lots, out of which I selected what I fancied, getting rid of duplicates, pieces

I did not care for, and sending modern and worthless things to be melted.

So far back as 1908—since when my collection has much improved—I had the pleasure of exchanging photographs with a great connoisseur of old pewter, and I was very gratified when he wrote to me as follows :

" There is so much that is worse than valueless in most collections ; so much unnecessary repetition, that large collections become irritatingly monotonous. Although your pieces are often repeated, the repetition represents always an interesting variation ; and this feature contributes the element of evolution which is always interesting, and without which no collection is complete or satisfactory. I congratulate you, therefore, upon your possessions, and think you have done remarkably well during the short time. Could you let me see the two ' salts ' marked on the photo ? "

I sent the two " salts," and he remarked, " The little one is particularly interesting as it is a reversible one, the only specimen I have seen."

That special " salt " is the queer looking little thing in the centre of the salt group, and I am giving it more space than its size or appearance seem to warrant. It was first caught sight of in a shop at Leeds, where a broker had it filled with black varnish into which he was dipping his brush, while he was giving an artistic touch-up to some of his stock. The hunter spotted pewter, and after some little chaff was told he could have it if he would bring something that would do for holding the varnish ; this he bought at a shop not far off, and the change was soon effected. It is a curious specimen, for whichever

way it stands it will hold the salt, but in its present position it will hold more than twice as much as when it is placed the other way uppermost.

The results of my hunting and advertising not keeping pace with my ambition for more, I secured the assistance of a friend in Ireland, who proved to be a friend indeed. He had a dog which was constantly jumping on the sofa and chairs, so he called him Zacchæus because " he was everlastingly telling him to come down."

Have you heard of " Phil the Fluter " ? I had not until I heard our friend warble of the wonderful effect the execution of that phenomenal flautist produced upon his hearers, but I imagine the charm attained would be as comparable with that of my Irish friend as modern is to antique, while he has a tongue that would " wile a bird off a tree." Like Father O'Flynn he'd " a wonderful way wid him, the young and ould sinners were wishful to trade wid him." I am not digressing but adorning the tale to point the moral. With his cheery manner he succeeded all the time to such an extent that I had to wire him " Hold ! enough." Later when other collectors sought my help to get them Irish measures he reported " Too late, the Jews have been round and bought up the lot. Why did you stop me just when I was getting my hand in ? " Explanatory of my reason for cancelling my early instructions, let me give the following. I was impatient to make a show, so told him to buy all the pewter plates he came across. A few days after seventy arrived in two filthy dirty sacks, the state of which corresponded fairly well with the appearance of their contents. He apologised later for the condition of the

sacks which " he had borrowed from a place where they had just skinned a dead horse." Some of these plates bore marks and a few others crests, but as the former owners had a strange custom of polishing the backs with sand, the marks were mostly rubbed off, and as they never cleaned the fronts, my getting that consignment into exhibition form required some trouble and expense, but as the Tommy said after getting C.B. for being absent without leave, " It was worth it."

Referring to this consignment and to the sacks in conversation later he expressed no wonder at my people complaining when they and their contents were dumped in the washhouse, as he thought they were a trifle high after he found the boots of the hotel, where he had to spend a night, had put them in his bedroom ! Worse than that, however, happened the following day. He had left them at one end of the station platform with a porter, that they might go in the guard's van, while he went to another part of the train and joined some friends. He had just got seated when the porter who must have followed him with the sacks on a truck, opened the door and enquired, " Will your honour have these suit cases in the carriage wid yer ? "

The miscellaneous articles which arrived at frequent intervals were wellnigh confusing, and it kept me busy finding out what many of them were really for, but when I found a pewter harp with a screw attached I was so bewildered I wrote and asked him what on earth this harp was out of, and he settled my mind by replying, " I thought it had come down from heaven."

On one occasion I saw quite a number of pieces in a

shop where I had now and then found an odd one, and after making a few purchases enquired the reason for this amazing influx, when I was informed, " You see it's this way; there's a lady who's got a husband who's been collecting pewter until she's got fed up, so as he's gone off for a few days she asked me to call and take the lot away, as she is not going to have any more of the dirty stuff about." Sequel—they lived happily ever after.

For a time I adopted the practice of getting men I knew to save pewter for me, and, as my rambles permitted, calling on them periodically. On one occasion I was looking through the window of a marine store at ——— when I noticed something I was on the look-out for. I entered, and enquired, " How about the pewter ? " The old fellow replied :

" Hello, you've come at last ? It must be six months since you asked me to save any bits that came in."

" Oh, well," I said, " it's better late than never," and paid him what he asked.

I had never visited the place before. Reader, I hope you have never been the victim of mistaken identity.

You will recollect the story I told of my friend who brought me my first eight-day clock. In talking over reminiscences lately, I asked if he remembered assisting me to get pewter. Instantly he replied, " Remember ! I shall remember it to my dying day. I was at Sneinton (Nottingham), and I asked a marine store man had he any pewter. He said, ' Not here, but I have any amount at my Radford place.' Now Radford was out of my way, but I thought I would do you a good turn, so I padded there, about twenty minutes' walk—it was warm. When

I got there, I was offered about half a hundredweight of zinc that I should think had for a few years previously been fastened on a pub counter. Of course I had to walk back, and I never felt so hot in my life."

MARKS

This is an all important subject to some collectors and I feel I ought to treat it with a consideration bordering on veneration, but anyone who has had to put up with the queries I have been compelled to answer, which has necessitated my fetching the step-ladder to bring down plates from shelves in order that the marks may be examined, would have the reverential esteem knocked out of him. On one occasion a lady who had taken a superficial look at my display remarked "What a number of pieces you have. Do they all bear the London mark ? "

I was taken aback as I was unaware she was so well up in the subject, but when she informed me she had begun to collect and had already bought a 5s. half-pint tankard with a cross and crown stamped on the bottom, which the seller had assured her was the London mark, then I understood.

When another visitor asked, " Is it all marked ? " I replied that I collected makes, not marks, and that was why I had such a variety of pieces, and that many of my most interesting specimens never bore any.

Those readers who want solid books of reference on this point will find them among the works issued by authors whose names are well known and to whose remarkable patience in probing into the past I am under

a debt of gratitude. I must add that from information received a work is coming out which will be quite the last word on old pewter, its makers, and marks. I will here repeat a statement which has been printed in almost every book on old pewter since the flood of 1667—viz.: that the early touch plates of makers' marks were destroyed in the Great Fire of London.

With the aid of my old watchmaker's magnifying glass, 2¼ inches diameter, cased in horn and hinged on an iron rivet to shut up and carry in the pocket, I have just examined the fine quart tankard stamped " Js Dixon " in three small panels. This was no doubt James Dixon's mark just after he lost his partner Smith, who had been with him since 1809, and as he took his son into the business in 1824, this mark I think, would only have been used for about twelve months, and must be very scarce. Underneath the maker's name I see the first Excise mark, " WR " surmounted with a small crown. Next I find an imperfect impression which looks like " NOXO," but I can make no sense out of that ; then I discover a stamp " Crown V.R. 106," and another with a Crown between the letters " V.R." also the figures " 50," these all denoting that at least three inspectors have passed this tankard as up to the standard at different periods of its useful career.

Now I came to the most interesting part to my mind, of the outward signs visible to the naked eye ; under the word " QUART," which is boldly stamped, there are the initials " T.B." and a fine large crown with the date " 1823 " all neatly engraved with some embellishment. The initial letters will no doubt be those of the landlord

Mahogany Corner-Cupboard with Pewter.

PLATE XVIII.

Old Pewter.

PLATE XIX.

PLATE XIX

DESCRIBING THE PEWTER

First and Second Shelves. Note the two Tea Infusers in which the tea used to be brewed to replenish the small teapots. The Teapot on the right of the large Queen Anne is stamped "half-pint," so will no doubt have been in a refreshment house when tea was scarce. The only makers' names on the ten are Vickers and Dixon.

Third Shelf. See notes on Church Pewter (page 45). The Dish by Allen Bright in centre is $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches across, the Flagon is $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches high.

Fourth Shelf. Hot-water Jug. Jersey Cider or Wine Measure. Two Wine Flagons.

Top Shelf. See notes on Tappit Hens and Whisky Stoups (page 54).

of a licensed house known as " The Crown," and the year that in which the tankard was made for him.

I have several other tankards bearing makers' initials and touch marks, and I know they were made prior to 1826, which I notice did not come into the Inspector's mutilating hand until Queen Victoria was on the throne. I have just taken down two small measures of an uncommon shape, a gill and half-gill. They have had a small raised plate soldered on with raised lettering, " Imperial G. Crown R. IV," under. They were excised once " W.R.," and six times " V.R."

I have gone to this trouble to make it clear that the Excise marks are a lame guide to the age of early pewter, as the Weights and Measures Act which compelled inspection was passed only in 1826. These Excise marks have been fair game for the antique dealers, one of whom, when recommending me to buy some of his tankards and measures, which bore a " Liver " bird as an Excise stamp told me that Lady ——— was collecting only pewter which bore the Liverpool mark. He seemed surprised at my ignorance when I told him this was the first time I had heard Liverpool was celebrated for the manufacture of pewter.

PEWTER CANDLESTICKS

Before going to bed I will just tell you how I got these tall fellows shown on Plate XX. They were in a greengrocer's shop window, so I thought I would buy some apples. I came out with these 10½ inch candlesticks as well. No, I did *not* steal them, and they were not actually given away, but that is not what I wanted to tell you. They have loose tops and in consequence are

extra special. Be sure you blow out the light. Nearly all pewter tops get melted through the candles being left burning until they get down to the sockets.

Of the candlesticks in the group I wonder which you will like the best. I prefer the 7 inch, as they are oblong shape, base pillar and top ; the bottoms have the original wood filling and the very old baize to stand on. I found these suddenly in the office of a gentleman who perchance made a lot of money out of me ; anyway, shortly after this final transaction he retired from business, and built and endowed a—cinema. One candlestick was broken and the other needed repair, and as I could not clean them in the usual way I sent them to a manufacturer who made a good job and gave them a polish without injury to the priceless bottoms. The $4\frac{1}{2}$ inch pair were kindly sent to me by a lady in Norway. I bought the 8 inch straight pillar pair from a Jew, who later wished to buy them back as he had found a new customer who would give 30s. for them. As I have given you these sizes you can easily guess the heights of the remainder.

CHURCH PEWTER

Church pewter which has been associated with Church worship now gets more worship than it did in its Church days. Firstly from the dealers, who seem to be able to get any money they like to ask from some collectors, who in their turn worship their expensive idols mainly on account of the satisfaction they experience in the knowledge that no other collector can worship at the same shrine. The flagon shown on Plate XIX originally came from Bearley Church, near Stratford-on-Avon.

PLATE XX

DESCRIBING THE PEWTER

Bottom Shelf. Pair Bedroom Candlesticks with loose tops and extinguishers. Quaint Teapot. Tea Caddy. Chocolate Pot. Two-handled and one-handled Caudle Cups.

First Shelf. Spill Bowl inscribed "43" with crown and bugle, showing it belonged to the Leinster Regiment. Seven Beakers. Funnel dated 1698.

Second Shelf. Tobacco Jars. The two end ones are of lead, the one on the left being made by hand. The other is cast, and has on each side a reproduction of "The Last Supper" by Leonardo Da Vinci, very clearly moulded, while it is fitted with the old oak bottom fastened with iron studs.

Third Shelf. Three Baluster-shaped Wine Measures. Four Irish Measures. Five Measures.

Fourth and Top Shelves. See notes on Candlesticks (page 44).

PLATE XXI

DESCRIBING THE PEWTER

Bottom Shelf. Spice Box. Spice Dredger. Box Inkstand. Sand Sprinkler for drying the ink. Tray with Sheffield Plate Snuffers. Snuff Holder. Scotch Token Box.

First Shelf. At either end three Measures. Four Wine Cups. Three Measures in centre.

Second Shelf. Flask; top screws in and not on—a peculiarity of early Flasks. Wine Bottle Stand. Pap Boat and two Castor Oil Spoons (see notes). Rat-tail Toddy Ladles. Mould for Clay Eggs. Small Tea Caddy. Odd-shaped Flask.

Third Shelf. Tinder Box. Sandwich Case. Combined Sandwich Case and Flask. Saddle Flask and Cup. Tea Caddy. Snuff Box. Cigar Case.

Fourth Shelf. Peppers, except centre, which is probably for sugar.

Fifth Shelf. Double-ended Egg-cup. Egg-cup from St. Bees Lighthouse. Salts—three-legged, dated 1801. Glass-lined. Reversible. French. Three-legged Sphinx. Swan. Plain. Three-legged early Elkington. Two Egg-cups.

Sixth Shelf. Mustards. The three largest have fixed glass lining.

Top Shelf. Queen Victoria and Prince Albert with date 1840. Irish Harp. Cream Jugs and Sugar Basin (J. Vickers). Centre Cream and one adjoining are blue glass lined, and the fitting of the Pewter cover denotes careful workmanship.

I was assured by the dealer that "Shakespeare attended Bearley Church."

"Did he read the lessons?"

"Of course, that's why he went."

After this I felt compelled to buy it.

I have some alms-dishes which may have done serious duty and I have one which I feel sure has never been inside any sacred building. I have also an old two-handled cup and a pair of collecting plates from the old Runcorn Baptist Chapel, which was erected soon after 1800 and closed about 1880; a small private set, paten and chalice and an engraved Scotch chalice, and I will embellish these notes by relating the extraordinary circumstance which brought the latter into my fold at a time when I was yearning for something sacramental.

I was in my office and had just put down a pewter snuffers-tray when a traveller for a Scottish firm was announced. As soon as the interview commenced he opened his bag to get out his samples, when my eye chanced to catch a glimpse of something almost hidden by a sleeping garment and my instinct spotted pewter. He told his tale and waited for an indication of the impression he had created, which was conveyed to him in this form.

"Excuse me, but was that a piece of old pewter I caught sight of in your bag?"

"Yes, sir; are you interested in old pewter? I slept the night in Warrington and I saw this in a shop as I was going to the station; I think it is an old rose-bowl, and I shall be pleased to give it to you if you will have it."

Of course, I couldn't think of such a thing, but I

should be glad to exchange with him for a snuffers-tray I had on my desk. He assured me that he would be delighted, and as I always endeavour to give pleasure to others I fetched the tray. That gentleman secured a contract and a tray and left me with thanks and a seventeenth-century Scotch chalice. You never know your luck when collecting.

But for my awkward conscience I should include the basin shown on Plate VI, this being sold as "a vestry piece." It may have been used by the parson, or for washing the Communion vessels, anyway I preferred to believe the dealer, and gave it a conspicuous position, which the ladies objected to, and I found it relegated to the rear. On seeking an explanation, and calling it "a vestry piece," I retired hurt, so to speak, by the remark "Vestry! Why my aunt had a thing like that, in which she made us children wash our hands," and then, still so gently o'er me stealing, memory would bring back the feeling of us youngsters having been caused to do the same very necessary performance in a similar utensil, with cold water from the pump at the old house at home fifty to sixty years ago.

FAKED PEWTER

I had not been many years a collector before I found spurious Communion cups and Communion sets were on the market and I obtained some very enlightening information, much of which I cannot publish. It was the practice to blacken the new pieces with acid to give them an appearance of age, and I heard of an instance relating to hundredweights of faked pewter, but I am coming

straight to the point and the photographs on Plates XXV and XXVI will corroborate my statement. I was further informed that they were making deep dishes out of old bedpans, preserving the maker's mark on the bottom. I had had a bedpan hidden away in the stable loft for some time, and I decided to prove how far this information was correct. The pan had come from Ireland with a box full of "gatherings," and I had almost decided to sell it to be melted.

I eventually wrote to a firm of pewter manufacturers explaining the conversion I wished to have effected, and they informed me they would do the job if I would say whether I wanted a deep dish or a shallow one and what width of rim I desired. In about three weeks after I had sent them the bedpan I received the fine deep (alms) dish bearing the maker's name and mark—Joseph Austen—well preserved, proving the article was made in Cork over 100 years ago. It looks very well indeed and I have never had its virtue questioned; in fact when I have told visitors they have been greatly astonished, while a few have been hard to convince.

Now you understand my remark that I had one "alms dish" that had never been inside a sacred edifice.

When the Pewterer's done his pewtering,
And his work is quite au fait:
When his making's turned to faking,
And the marks are left O.K.;
The collector sees, and then agrees,
The pewter must be old.
Now doubts arise, before his eyes,
He fears that he's been sold.

PLATES AND DISHES

These under the eye of the camera are more or less alike, especially more—then let it suffice the reader to learn that I have forty small and thirty large of various sizes displayed wherever a likely space is available without giving a too crowded appearance. They nearly all bear makers' marks or owners' crests or initials, or evidence that they have been put to good use at some time or other. I have been told that when these big chaps were in vogue the various conglomerations forming the meal were heaped together and formed a goodly pile, so there is no doubt of the authenticity of the story of the Scottish farmer with a prodigious appetite at a Rent Dinner who when they wanted to take away his plate said " Bide awee for I hae just found a doo (pigeon) in the reddin o' ma plate."

As regards the rims, while I know some enthusiastic collectors could talk for a week on this feature, which to the uneducated suggests distinction without a difference, I will not labour the point.

I saw some very bright 9 inch plates in London recently with ornamental rims, and out of curiosity enquired the price. I was told 25s. each, but the information that they were Dutch was not vouchsafed.

Probably my " pride of the paddock " plate is one on Plate XIX (facing p. 43). It has a raised bead running round the centre of the rim, is thought to be early eighteenth century, and was made by Allen Bright, who has since retired from business. Judging by its shape it should pass muster as a genuine alms dish ;

though it may have been constructed to hold pennies in the kirk, I think it just as likely it held puddings in the kitchen—a thought inspired by the old knife-cuts on the bottom.

I have referred to the Irish plates being scoured on the back, and wiped on the front. Apropos of this remark I have a set of eight with the crest of a sea-horse on the rim ; the marks are all obliterated, with the exception of the word " Jonas," and by the lettering I was able to identify it as made by Jonas Durand about 1660. I also have three plates with the crest which represents the red hand of Ulster, and I believe they would originally be the property of an old Derbyshire family that has an estate in Ireland.

I have one very rare plate inasmuch as it bears on its surface ten rows of tap marks made with a round-headed hammer. The number in each circle lessens until they get down to seven, which surround the centre tap. This plate bears the initials and touch impression of the maker, which are undecipherable, but that does not worry me. I would far rather have the uncommon surface and indistinct marks than plain marks and a smooth surface. The strange thing is that if anyone wants a plate to, perhaps, stand a pot on, and there is no pottery one handy, or the artistic eye thinks a certain pot or flower would go better with a pewter than with a coloured pottery plate, they invariably lift this one off the dresser shelf, when any of the others would do equally well. This must stop, as I find the treatment does not improve its peculiar appearance.

On the first shelf of the oak dresser (Plate VI) there

are four Scotch plates made by William Hunter, of Edinburgh, 1749-1773. The fronts must always have been well polished, for they shine like silver now. The backs have been kept clean, though not scoured, as the maker's name and touchmarks are quite distinct. One pair were called "meatplates" and the other "pudding" or "porridge plates." The latter are deep and would pass for collecting-plates among church pewter in some hands. My obtaining possession of these from the shelves of a farm kitchen in Scotland is an illustration of the proverb that kissing goes by favour. I wish I could obtain more in the same very agreeable manner.

As evidence of the age of the plates and dishes I give the following list of makers' names, and the approximate dates when they were making these things hum. For most of my records I have searched my books of reference, and when these have failed me I have appealed to Mr. H. H. Cotterell, a great authority on marks, who has very kindly furnished me with the information required whenever possible.

Allen Bright	..	1750
J. Baskervile	..	1695
R. Chambers	..	
Tudor Rose	..	Early 17th century
T. Compton	..	1807
Thorne, London	..	
George Seymour	..	1768
Brown ..	..	17th century
G. Smith ..	..	1676

G. Smith	1790
Jonas Durand ..	1658
William Hunter ..	1750
John French ..	1687
Charles Clarke (Irish)	1790
John Duncomb ..	1730

I must mention a pair of very rare plates of special shape with tooled borders. Two holes are drilled in each, and it is probably due to the fact that some vandal has scratched the name " Lizzie " on them that they have not been put to the use for which they were intended, namely, to embellish the drop handles of an old-time coffin. When an obliging broker told me he had a couple of plates he had saved for me, and then produced these ghastly things, I was rendered mute.

Tappit Hens (Plate XIX, facing p. 43).

" Paint Scotland greetin owre her thrissle ;
Her mutchkin-stoup as toom's a whissle."

Burns.

Well she may with whisky at half a guinea a bottle !

When we were in Barmouth we stayed at the Cors-y-gedll Hotel, and when I asked the landlord, who up to that point had been the personification of geniality, " What is the meaning of Cors-y-gedll ? " he blurted out, " Nobody knows ; everybody asks me that question," and left me abruptly. I was not a collector of old pewter in those days, but I can now fully appreciate the cause of his irritability, for the number of times I have been asked, " What is the meaning of ' Tappit Hens ' ? "

leaves me tired. I once suggested that the name may have originated because they tappited to see if it was empty or not, only to be further puzzled by the query "But why hen?" and I could only suggest that "It cackled whenever it laid an egg," which was condemned as an inane joke, which if I had any conceit of myself as a humorist I should never repeat.

Having read so much about Tappit Hens, I have known all about the history a long time ago, and I have forgotten most of it. The name for a Scottish pint measure of a certain shape was "Tappit Hen," which held two quarts (Imperial). A "Chopin" held a quart and a "Mutchkin" an Imperial pint. My photograph shows a pair of Tappit Hens and a Chopin.

After Tappit Hens came the lidded whisky stoups which were in use in Scotland from 1826 to about 1870, when an Act was passed to do away with profiteering by short measure, and so the use of lids was prohibited.

As inspired individuals began to buy up the original Tappit Hens the supply gave out, so the dealers elevated the whisky stoups to the designation of the former. I do not exaggerate, for I have seen Tappit Hens advertised, and had them sent on approval, only to find the much less valued stoup, or pot-bellied measures as they were often called. Now I suppose they are getting done up, and that any old thing with a lid on is a Tappit Hen. Anyway, I was told by a gentleman, whose knowledge and experience of his profession are much greater than they can be of Scottish pewter, that he had just bought a French Tappit Hen!

In all my travels I have only been offered the genuine

article once, and that was in Glasgow some years back, and as I already had two of the same size I did not buy, although it would have been a good investment at the price at which I could then have purchased it. The three imposing Tappit Hen shaped measures I have bear on the lids the imprints of the initials of a fine family, whose old grey stone hall still stands in its lonely but grand surroundings on the Pentland Hills, of which I am constantly reminded by the kindness of a descendant, who placed these treasures in my hands.

I am not a statistician, but I dare hazard an opinion that there are ten or may be twenty times more " Tappit Hens " in existence to-day than ever were made.

It is now time I tapped Burns again :

> " *Come, bring the tither mutchkin in,*
> *And here's, for a conclusion.*"

BRITANNIA METAL

This name puts me on my mettle, and as the uncertainty of what is the difference between pewter and Britannia metal has not to my knowledge been clearly explained I intend to deal with this question somewhat didactically.

I was so struck with the effect of turning my 70th Regiment pint pot from a dirty disused mug into a pleasurable thing that I visited all likely shops for some few miles round and bought up everything I thought and was told was old pewter, and I soon had more than would fill a corner cupboard, which I had lined with blue velvet to show it off. Then I bought " Marks on

Old Pewter," by W. Redman, which was the only book bearing on the subject I could hear of, and in it I read :

" The manufacture of goods in Britannia (white metal) was an important 18th century addition to the Sheffield industries. Whether James Dixon or James Vickers commenced first to make this kind of ware we are not able to say. It is said that James Vickers bought for five shillings from a sick man whom he happened to be visiting a recipe for making white metal. The experiment turned out a great success, and for years both these firms were kept busy making all kinds of articles of what was called Britannia metal. Now these old articles are often called pewter, which is a mistake ; neither of these firms made any pewter ware. Alloy : 80 per cent. tin, 10 per cent. antimony, and a little copper."

This was rather a blow, as some of my purchases were stamped "Britannia Metal" and a few others " B.M.E.P.," although the electro-plate was mostly worn off, giving the things a pewter-like look. Next I obtained a short history of the firm of James Dixon and Sons, and found they did make pewter in their early days. I also learned from a history of Sheffield in the 18th Century that Vickers started making money and Britannia metal at the end of that period, so this stuff seemed ancient enough.

I now had the pleasure of obtaining " Old Pewter," by Malcolm Bell, and found among the illustrations articles of which I had duplicates, one of which was a pepper-pot, and this reminds me that when I went in for this and inquired the price, and was told fourpence, I

repeated the word "fourpence!" which immediately drew the rejoinder "Yes, fourpence, it's half full of pepper." From the trouble I had in getting out that solid pepper, I rather think the pewter must have been built round it.

I opened a correspondence with Mr. Bell, and he most courteously and kindly gave me every assistance. In one of his letters he wrote: "I must confess that for my own part I could not pretend to draw any hard and fast line between pewter and Britannia metal, for though one can tell the difference between the extreme types by the eye the varieties merge so gradually into each other that the boundary is indefinable. In fact, hard metal pewter with 96 parts tin, 8 of antimony, and 2 of copper is practically identical with the Britannia metal containing 92 parts of tin, 8 of antimony, and 2 of copper," which was what I expected. Consequently I have among my lot many pieces which may have been sold as Britannia metal in the old days, but I would defy anyone to pick them out and prove them not to be pewter.

I asked Mr. Redman to come over and see me, and he readily did so. After he had gone, and from remarks he had made, I gathered he had been more impressed by the kindness of my partner than with the quality of some of my pewter. The result of this interview was that I never refused anything in the pewter line of mature age, and came to the conclusion that the difference in the names was a clever move of cute business men to enable them to charge something extra for their wares which were made of somewhat harder metal than was being generally used at the time. I have frequently come

across early plates and tankards that differed materially in their hardness.

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES

Pap-Boat. On shelf 3, Plate XXI (facing p. 47), I show a specimen of rarity. Pap-boats would be as common as babies at one time. This one was bought at Lytham, and was introduced to me as a pig feeder. It is 4½ inches long.

Castor-oil Spoons. What a fuss they made about taking a dose of castor oil, or had they not conceived the idea of disguising it between other liquids? The manipulation of such a spoon was a tricky job, for after getting it into the mouth a twist would be needed to bring the lid on to the tongue, the lid would partly drop open and the castor-oil would then flow gently down the patient's throat, provided of course there was no resistance. This forcible feeding was of everyday occurrence. The larger of the spoons is about seventy years old, and the smaller about ninety years.

There are eighty-five specimens on Plate XXI, and I believe that the reader, with the aid of a magnifying glass, will be able to form a very good idea of each piece. The photographing of the groups generally entailed quite a lot of work, and some anxiety, for as I do not develop myself, or, rather, as I do not do my own developing, I had put all the things back in their places before I knew if the negatives were right. Fortunately it turned out all the exposures had been correctly timed, which was more than I anticipated with the varying and often poor December light.

The "Odamifino" (Plate xxvi, facing p. 74.).

This was picked up quite recently by a keen collector of rags and bones and other relics whose glory has departed. It was snapped out of his day's doings by a flourishing dealer in anything that blew into his yard, and it was only by my going over the top of about 10,000 rabbit skins, the age of which could be more accurately guessed by their odour than by their seal-skin-like appearance, that I caught sight of it. Then ensued a discussion as to the part this pewter had played in the past. The R and B collector called it a "Funniosity," the skin specialist diagnosed it as a "Cream jug," while a third gentleman (who dare not take on any other job than spirit testing while he is drawing out-of-work pay) said without hesitation, but not very distinctly, "Odamifino," with a pronounced emphasis on the second syllable. When I suggested it might be a barber's shaving-pot I was immediately ruled out of that court, as "Barbers never used anything made of pewter."

Now if any collector can inform me when "Odamifinos" were in vogue, and why they came into existence, I shall be obliged, and in the meantime I will consider the cleaning, for is not cleanliness akin to collectingness? At present it has hardly an appearance suitable to my cabinet of rarities, while its high-sounding designation suggests that as its proper environment, and yet I have in mind the quip of that inveterate humorist Froude, "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever," muttered at the Annual Meeting of the Peace Congress, when Carlyle chipped in with a chuckle, "Rough hew them as we will,"

to be capped by that infernal joker Dante with the remark, " You cannot paint the lily whiter." At this point Mr. Chairman Darwin brought back the members to their customary somnolence with the admonition: " Come, gentlemen, please, don't ape the silly goat. The next subject for consideration is ' Shaving—should each customer have fresh water ? ' "

CLEANING

This was a great source of trouble to me and to those associated with my home life, and it was not until I had strained their patience almost to the separation point that I was informed: " You really must make some arrangement for getting the pewter cleaned elsewhere, as the maids have given warning they cannot put up with the master messing up the kitchen any longer. Half the saucepans are ruined, as of course they could not be used after having that filthy stuff in them."

I started boiling corroded pieces and letting them soak in washing soda all night, but found this made no impression on those which had been most neglected, while some came bright after a good scouring with hot water and Brookes's soap, being later polished with methylated spirit and plate powder. I may here advise the reader that the latter treatment is all I now find necessary to furbish up my stock and keep it presentable.

I will not dwell further on my early difficulties, but relate how they were overcome. At the time I was almost overwhelmed with putrid plates, dishes, and other things I had received Mr. Redman came to my rescue with the following recipe:

"2 oz. rock lime, 2 oz. caustic soda, 6 oz. common salt, 8 oz. common soda, dissolve in 3 quarts of water in a saucepan on the fire. When dissolved pour into a bowl, and when cold add eight quarts of cold water. Steep as long as necessary as much pewter as the liquid will cover, and the bath can be used until the liquor has lost its nature."

I had a mixture made in a bath and let the things lie in this until the corrosion was easily wiped off, and I entrusted this job to a man who had been used to cleaning machinery and whose practical knowledge and serviceable hands made him far more competent than his employer. I never had the surface of the pewter injured in any way with the strong solution, and so long as the rubbing with the coarse flannel and Brookes's soap was done the way of the grain—that is, circular or round and round—no scratching was apparent. When I say I have dealt with no fewer than 1,450 pieces the reader may gather that the trouble and expense has not been trifling.

I hope this information in regard to cleaning may be of value to many amateurs, to whom I wish good luck.

In case some curious minds may wonder how I account for the difference between the total given and the 500 pieces I stated I now have I do not mind disclosing that I sent a lot of it to a friend at New York who was anxious to exhibit his old family plate, and I learnt when he was last over that as the brightness I had been at such pains to secure militated, in his opinion, against the appearance of antiquity he had abstained from further cleaning, and that the pewter was now looking quite old.

I believe I must have earned that friend's undying

gratitude, for did I not provide him with his great-great-grandfather's clock, and further spared him and shipped out an early dated Broadwood grand piano, which I had previously converted into a dressing-table, and which he has since discovered is the identical instrument that his great-great-grandmother used for the five-finger exercise ?

THE TINSMITH

I have mentioned that on some occasions I found it necessary to send pewter to the manufacturers, but I have scores of pieces which only required slight repairs—soldering, straightening and reshaping—such as an accomplished tinsmith could manage. Fortunately I found the man of the hour, day, month, and year, and not far off, and I cannot say how much time I spent in his workshop. He was always very busy, and if I sent him anything to do I never knew when I should see it again, so I had to resort to taking it myself and waiting until it was finished, otherwise it would be half done and then laid aside while he went out to pick a lock, or put down while he mended a kettle or something that was most urgently required. Really the way he handled my pewter was terribly fascinating, making pieces so hot at times and putting them so close to his fire that I positively trembled for fear they would be ruined altogether, but he never made a mistake.

His favourite expression was, " You understand me," so the reader will appreciate that these three words kept coming into his conversation in the most unexpected places. " It was a good job—you understand me—that

church was burnt out. I got all the organ pipes ; I'm using some of them in this solder—you understand me—about 18 cwt. of them altogether."

I took him a big jug to have the handle soldered not long ago. I saw him start it and said I would call on my way back from the bank. I did so and found the job only partly done. By way of explanation he said :

" Mr. A. has been in about a freeze—you understand me."

" No, I'm afraid I don't. What is a freeze ? "

" A refrigerator for milk."

" Oh, will you be much longer ? "

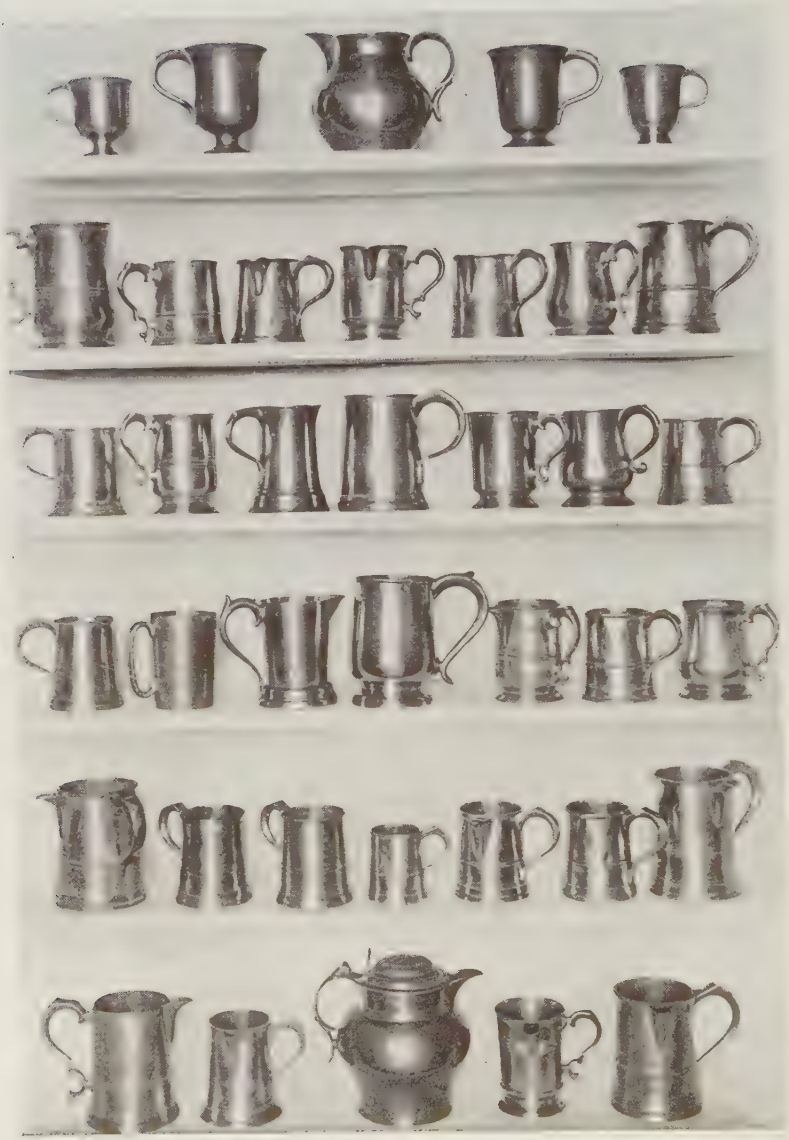
In the course of my many entertaining interviews I learnt that he first went into a shop when he was aged 8, in the year 1847. Tinsmiths then used to fix all gaspipes, and I have found out since that Westminster Bridge was first illuminated with gas in 1813. But to go back to my confrère. He did not stop in the shop long, as he was sent to school for about twelve months. The school was in a cellar, with forms round, on which there was always a birch-rod handy, and as the schoolmaster had been a soldier he knew how to use it, and my friend added : " You understand me—there were no inspectors in those days."

It was on the floor of this workshop that I literally " picked up " the James Dixon quart tankard which I described under *Marks*. It lay amongst other scrap pewter in a dark corner, ready for going into the melting-pot, when I kicked against it and so prolonged its life. It is now 96.

I am afraid my tinsmith is no respecter of old age, for he is at the time I write this only eighty, and when I

Pewter Snuff Boxes.

PLATE XXII.



Pewter Pots (All inscribed except the top row).

PLATE XXIII.

congratulated him upon his steady hand and wonderful eyesight he smiled and said : " My mother was ninety-one, and she didn't know what spectacles meant."

More power to his elbow.

Conclusion

I have little more to say on the subject of old pewter generally, as the Tavern Measures are given an article on their own. Of course, I have left the photographs to do most of the talking, and I hope they have risen equal to the occasion. Next to the fascination of collecting comes the pleasure of exhibiting to an appreciative audience, and this brings to mind a delightful evening when a young witty Canadian went through my show, and at the conclusion, in the naïvest manner possible, said: " I have asked you a great many questions, sir, but as I am undecided in my mind I thought before I left I had better enquire, ' does the pewter go with your daughter ? ' "

THE PEWTER POT

Half a century ago Winchester Cathedral in the winter was decidedly cold, and on occasions some of those small choir boys, who found little warmth and comfort from their white linen surplices, now and then collapsed during the services. Candles may have answered the purpose of providing all the illumination required, but they were hardly a flaming success for heating purposes. In the records of the deliberation of the Dean and Chapter at that time there would be a resolution to pay Mr. Edward Sheppard, of the Bishop's Palace, a certain sum to provide

each of the youthful songsters entrusted to his care with a pot of porter each day with their dinners. Which denotes there was no Pussyfoot in that Chapter. Mr. Sheppard, whose name I use with all respect, was most particular as to his pupils' cleanliness, and every morning held a hand and neck inspection in the long hall by the entrance door. To illustrate that he had a mind for the internal as well as the external frames which filed past him he once a week, being provided with a bowl of brimstone and treacle, administered a tablespoonful to each boy. If Mr. Sheppard had given the same scrutiny to the big can in which the porter was drawn from the barrel there would have been no heel taps in our pewter pots, but as the can was rarely washed out, and the porter left from one day was frothed up when being filled the next, the result, so far as benefit to the boys was concerned, must have been flat, stale, and unprofitable.

No writer refers oftener to the pewter pot than does Charles Dickens, and he might have said of me, as he did of Master Micawber, " He was brought up to the Church."

In the book of the chronicles of Pickwick the reader can easily find the text suitable for my discourse. That great and good man with his host of friends used the pewter pot with such effect that it would be a national scandal to allow it to be relegated to the lumber shop. Old Pickwick and old pewter are synonymous, and so let us keep his memory alive by preserving the main medium of his hospitable and generous nature. Time is changing everything so ruthlessly that unless some of us have a care the passing of the pewter pot will become an absolute

fact. To guard against such a calamity, and to preserve models of a commodity which played so important a part in the episodes that made life in England all the brighter for its presence in past centuries, I have gathered together a representative array of old pewter pots, many bearing quaint inscriptions, which, if they could speak for themselves, would enable me to treat you to a chapter replete with true stories of adventure, love, crime, deeds of chivalry, and scenes of woe which no imagination could evolve.

What of the "70th Regiment" cup? What stirring episodes has that been through?—among others, probably the Afghan War of 1840. I do know that the "Shipwrights' Arms,' Limehouse Hole," pint took part in, and survived, the Indian Mutiny bivouacs and battlefields, as it was given by the then landlord to a soldier just before leaving home. I specially prize this; it has written on the front before the address the name, "D. Saul," alongside which is the toper's big initial, "K," and the number of his peg or hook on which it hung, "55," on the bottom. This number would be seen when looked up at from the floor.

If Pickwick has us in hand, we shun the battle and resort to the bottle, so let us look in at the "Windmill, Dartford," and see what manner of men were there. Surely not smugglers on the banks of the Thames? Of about the same period, what was the "Wellington, Shepherd's Bush," like? Rather a swagger inn, probably, judging by the beaded pattern of the mug, which was supplied or made by "W. R. Loftus, 146, Oxford Street," who has been, and will be, a long time dead. At the "Feathers" at Chiswick, and "Hope," Islington, they

must have had quite high-class callers, or why the lip on the tankards unless it were to pour the contents into beakers ? The customers at all inns were so diversified in character that I see no reason why the same measure should not have done for the post-boy on his frequent calls, for the parish priest on duty bent, or later by the highwayman in a hurry, if they held it in the left hand and turned the lip of the pot skywards.

From London to the " Blackburn Arms," Hale, situated on the Mersey, an old-time village, and home of the Ireland Blackburne family, was a long journey by road in those days, and the pewter pot would be in great request. I warrant this particular one was handed back many a time with a determination to " Have another, and dom the expense."

When I came across the pint inscribed " Post Office Hotel, Church Street, Soho," I wrote to a Fleet Street friend asking him to find out a likely date for it, and after making enquiries he reported he could find neither the hotel nor Church Street, and that the oldest man he had seen in Soho (a sexton, I think) could tell him nothing about either. The same friend was here one night, and I left him looking at these pewter pots. I heard a Fleet Street exclamation of surprise, and when I enquired the reason he held up the " Baker's Arms', Waltham Abbey," pint, saying, " Why, I was born close to the Baker's Arms."

The " Post Office Hotel " brings the post-boy of old to my mind, and I turn to the oldest book I possess, given to me by my father, in which he wrote my name in 1861. " The Sporting Scrap Book," by Henry Alken, con-

taining fifty plates, designed and engraved by himself, published by Thomas McLean, 26, Haymarket, 1824." I have always treasured this book, and the coloured prints are as good to-day as ever. I was wondering how often the pewter pot appeared in Alken's drawings, and I find twice. The first is entitled " The Post-Boy," who with a pair of harnessed horses has just called for drinks for himself and his horses, and no sooner has he got his than he has the pot to his lips. The shape is similar to the " Post Office Hotel " pint, but probably the " Post-Boy " needed a quart, for the pewter pot is as tall as his pot hat. In the second picture Alken shows a pewter pot with almost as much " frill " on the top as there is round the cap of the woman who holds it, and this one is also the same shape, which confirms my impression that the " Post Office Hotel " pint pot is about 100 years old.

I now turn my attention from the handy pints to the capacious quart pots, just the things to wash down a breakfast with ; pause and conjecture what " lovely " thirsts they must have had ! It was quite the custom to put the landlord's monogram on the front, and the name of the tavern on the bottom of the mugs ; there again is a theme for reflection. As a reason, I think we may assume there were kleptomaniacs, souvenir hunters, and sneak thieves in the far gone times, just as there are to-day, and by marking in this way it would limit the loss to the latter class, who would sell the things for old metal. These big mugs would well set off a table on which were pewter plates anything from nine to twenty inches in diameter. Although I have studied all the books written on old pewter, I have failed to find that it was

always a case of " One man, one quart," and am forced to the conclusion that there may have been odd occasions when more than one shared.

To get back to the pots illustrated, does any living man know where the " Baptist Head," High Holborn, stood ? It is perhaps typical of the country that the largest and heaviest quart comes from Ireland, and from the battered condition it was in when I got it, I surmised it had often been used to add weight to an argument.

My eye now wanders to the fine old loving cup made by John Edwards about 1750. This has a glass bottom to prove to all users how clear were its contents, and I wonder to what extent it has been used at family gatherings for weddings, christenings, and buryings, and the very important part it has played in making them all enjoyable. Glance at that copious lidded jug, and mulled ale at once suggests itself ; can you not hear the horn that gives warning of the stage coach, the bustle at the " Queen's Hotel " (called after Mary, Elizabeth, or Anne, probably), or imagine the anxiety of the passengers to test the brew, and how quickly the jug would be emptied on a cold journey, while on warmer days the flat-bottomed jug, full to the brim with foaming beer, would be equally welcome ? Some of the pots are fitted with a strainer at the lip, and this would be most useful in the period of poor lighting and typical practical joking by keeping hops, flies, wasps, cockroaches, or perhaps an odd mouse, out of the mouth of the customer using the mug. It would also be requisite to use the funnel when filling passengers' flasks, most travellers were no doubt provided with the latter of no mean size. The funnel

Pewter Pots. Lidded Tankards with makers' initials "J. C." (1780), "Y. & B.," "J. M." (1825), "T. P." (1710), "H. I." (1690), "T. L.," "T & C." (1775)

PLATE XXIV.

Front and Back of Faked "Alms-Dish."

PLATE XXV.

shown is dated 1698, while a particular flask I illustrate is a fine specimen; probably its original owner was a man of grit, for roughly engraved on one end is " PRO DAOS ET REGE," a fitting toast when the custom was " The Passing of the Pewter Pot."

You will, I hope, be interested in a study of the variety of shapes and handles on the photographs, but you need to handle these old things to realise their fascination; even if they bear no inscription or maker's mark, some of the early Excise marks, " G.R." or " W.R." with various town crests, are worth looking at. Could you examine the bottoms you would find red cut glass, plain glass (Waterford possibly), wood and pewter, double and single pewter bottoms, some with holes in their bottoms through age and ill usage, while one has no bottom at all, so you can't knock the bo ttom out of that. One of the quart measures bears the initials and touch mark of George Bagshaw, who was enrolled on the list of the Freemen of the Pewterers Company in 1826; it is boldly stamped with a crown, and the words " Imperial Standard " with a small stamp " Crown W.R." with " W.W." under. I am not sure what " W.W." stands for, but believe it will be the initials of the Excise Inspector, and that this measure would be the Imperial standard whereby the quart measures in a certain locality were tested. The list of inscriptions given should not fail to entertain; some are quaint and there may be one or two that a reader will recall, but I imagine that most of the addresses have ceased to exist.

This remark does not apply to the Old Whyte Harte Hotel at Wisbeach (now spelt Wisbech), for that is the

present day Izaac Walton Association House. My set of measures was made by Grimes, of London, for J. Hill, the landlord in 1880.

	INSCRIPTIONS.
Quart	T. B., Crown.
Lidded Jug.. ..	W. T. S., Queen's Hotel.
Quart, Lipped ..	G. Bamden. Wenlock Brewery Tap.
Pint ,, ..	Sportsman.
Beaker	H. Mattock, Malt Shovel, Dartford.
Pint	E. H. Bakers' Arms, Waltham Abbey.
,, ...	W. Bullin, Bears Paw Inn.
Quart	A. Johnston, Baptist Head, High Holborn.
Pint	G. C. Collier, Catherine Wheel, near Brentford.
,, ...	D. Saul, Shipwrights Arms, Limehouse Hole.
Lipped Pint ..	Hope, Islington.
Pint	Canteen, 70th Regt.
,, ...	J. E. B., The Feathers, Chiswick.
Quart, Lipped ..	G. Thompson, Tipperary.
,, ...	J.C.D., Montague Arms, Peckham.
Pint	C. M. — C. Mannerson, Windmill, Dartford.
,, Lipped ..	J. T. R., Duke's Head, Leman St., Southwark.
Pint	Post Office Hotel, Church St., Soho.
,, ...	Blackburn Arms.
,, ...	G. M. Wellington, Shepherds Bush.

Pint	G. A. Y., King's Arms, Woolwich.
,, ...	John Machin, Bimm. Tavern.
,, ...	A. B., Black Lion, Kingston.
,, ...	W. E., Flying Scud, Sutton St., Comml. Rd.
,, ...	Nichols, Court Sampson, Thomas St.
,, ...	Robt. Moor, Cockermouth in Cumberland.
,, ...	T. Forman, 35, Brompton Rd.
Quart, Lipped ..	Courtenay Arms, Starcross.
Pint	Barclay Perkins & Co. J. Nolan.
Quart	J. Hill, White Hart Hotel, Wisbeach

The collection continues to increase, and I have recently acquired a quart, mark " S.C." inscribed " Longden White, Ewell, 1820." Another, which belonged to W. James, Welney, marked four lions—a lipped quart by Geradin & Watson, stamped " G.R." 1826, and lastly a quart pot-bellied measure by W Nettleford, early 19th century, being the only measure of this shape which I have seen fitted with a lip. I must now end this potty discourse, and on pondering for a fitting quotation wherewith to conclude, I can think of none more suitable than one which I trow good King Hal is not likely to have used when ruminating on his bunch of wives—" Let 'em all come."

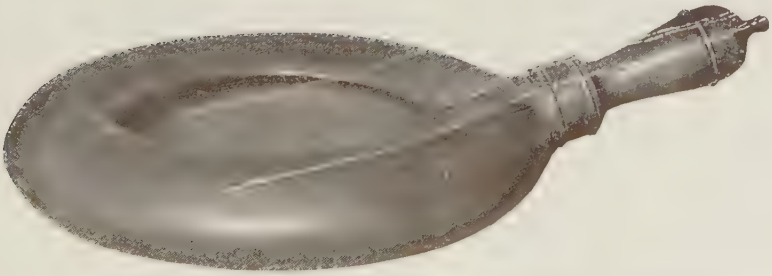
THE MYSTERY PIECE (*See* Plate XXVII, facing p. 75).

I have given this title to the photograph I recently had taken for various reasons which I will now particularise. Most books contain a mystery of some kind and the

creation in many instances must cause the author much anxious thought, but in my case the mystery is real up to the time of writing; possibly soon after this appears in print the mystery will be explained by some kind correspondent who possesses a similar piece. In the first place, I know not its proper name, so must call it for the time being "the piece." Where I obtained it will remain a mystery to the reader, but how I happened to become its possessor I will readily relate, and in doing so I confirm my previous statement that you never know your luck when collecting.

In the early part of 1919 business called me to London on several occasions, and as many readers will have had unpleasant experiences of the hotel accommodation there at that time they will not be surprised to hear that I made arrangements with friends who live in a fine old town umpteen miles from the City to take me in. On a visit in June I was walking to the station to catch the morning train to take me to London when I passed a broker's shop and of course stopped. Among a lot of furniture and odds and ends I noticed "the piece," and I thought at first it was a brass water bottle from India, but on further consideration I felt sure it was pewter, so I essayed to walk in, but locks, bolts and bars defied resistance, while no one took heed of the noise I was making. In the end I had to rush for the train. Business over I returned and was met at the station by a lady friend. I am afraid I hurried her along to the shop where I saw "the piece" still perched. I tried the door again, but it was still fastened, so I started knocking. My friend then informed me it was no use as it was the half holiday,

The "Odamifino."



Bed Pan which has been converted into the Faked "Alms-Dish."

PLATE XXVI.

The Mystery Piece.

PLATE XXVII.

but I was determined to get in if I rattled all night. At length I was admitted, found " the piece " was real old pewter, was informed they had had it a fortnight, and that it was a ROSE VASE, but they didn't know where it came from. There are antique shops in that town, and this was just the sort of thing they could have done with, so my picking it up when on a flying visit was most fortunate.

On returning to my real home " the piece " was much admired for its antique appearance and I was told I should spoil it if I had anything done to it, so I had it photographed in the state I found it. It bore no maker's marks and the shape was quite unknown to me, so I wrote to three pewter connoisseurs sending them each a photograph giving dimensions and weight and asking them to give me its name and age. These are the opinions I received :

No. 1 :

" Your VESSEL seems to be a VASE and latish. I have never seen one like it." And later he kindly wrote : " The more I think of your pewter JAR the more convinced I am that it dates about 1750."

No. 2 said :

" I thank you for the photograph of the interesting VASE or BOTTLE, for those are the only possible names one can give to the piece."

No. 3. wrote :

" I have seen two or three of the pieces your photograph shows but have never found out their purpose. I have heard them described as 1. LAVERS for the water

in Baptism. 2. WATER BOTTLE used in Tavern parlours, and I think the latter is more probable."

So you see I had then six names for it, and lately when my Irish friend was here I asked him his opinion and he said, " It reminds me of 'Rebecca at the Well.' " This set me longing to see what it looked like when Rebecca used it, so I got a painter to remove the corrosion with caustic and lime, as I had no bath mixture on tap, then I took it to my tinsmith and spent some time quaking—you understand me—for fear he should hole it or do something awful, but he straightened it, tapped out the dinges, and soon got it into its original shape. Strange to say it is the only piece of pewter in my collection which I prefer to see looking dull, the reason why is another mystery, but I have stopped having it polished up brightly like the rest. I really believe it is the oldest specimen in my collection, certainly it is the most antique in shape. It is nine inches high and its weight (2½ lbs.) denotes it was made when thick metal was worked with, and that is a sure sign of old times. It will not go with any pewter I possess, it makes it all appear comparatively modern, and so we have to allot it a position by itself on an old oak chest, and here I will leave " The Mystery Piece," with this poser—is it early Georgian or ogygian?

THIRD COURSE

Old Brass and Copper

Modern Antique—The Turling Pin—The Duck Carver—Scotch Measures—When Matches were Scarce—Wexford in Wales —Snuff-boxes and Other Things.

I HAVE only small collections of brass and copper to exhibit, and my reasons for buying these you see were mainly that often I had been poking about for pewter, and finding none, rather than waste the shopkeeper's time for nothing I would purchase a bit of old brass or copper, if I happened to notice any piece I judged worth having. It is often difficult to identify old brass, and the quantity of "antique" that was manufactured in Birmingham alone, some years before the war, must have been very extensive. I found it nearly everywhere I went, and still see much of it about.

To instance the worth of my statement I remember, when in Scotland, I mentioned to a collector friend that I should like to have a turling pin, which is a combined knocker and latch, for I had seen such a thing spoken of in a book I had just been reading. Not long afterwards I received a parcel containing a turling pin, which I found at once was new brass that had been in an acid bath for discoloration, and to give it the necessary old appearance. My friend wrote that he had been fortunate in getting this for 16s. and the antique dealer had assured him it had come out of an old house at, I think, Inverness. I

returned the find, with thanks, and I do not know my Scotsman if he failed to get his money back. I am still without a turling pin, though I have one genuine old knocker from Ripon, which is on a door where it ought to be, so you will not find it on the photograph.

In the summer of 1911 I had a fine specimen of a corn which I carried in my boot, and while in an antique shop I knocked it against something black that had been put on the floor to keep a door open. I looked down to see what had caused the pain and my regrettable exclamation, and was informed, "it was a lead ink-stand, and did it hurt?" I knew it was decidedly hard metal from my experience, so I gave half-a-crown for it, with the idea of having my revenge by cleaning the clumsy brute, for he had no right to be carving a duck in the beastly black state he was in. This class of ink-stand was made in Birmingham about eighty years ago.

Brass and copper as antiques have much to recommend them, as no matter what state they may be in when found, they can very soon be made presentable by a good rubbing with metal polish. These metals preserve themselves remarkably well for centuries, hence it is that occasionally rare old specimens can be found by anyone with their eyes skinned. The fine 12 in. brass pot, with lion head ring handles and claw feet, I saw in a second-hand shop at Buxton, and bought for seven shillings, but I had to get a hamper to bring it home in. I have other large things, such as warming-pans, chestnut roaster, churchwarden pipe rack, gong, etc., but the inclusion of these would have spoiled the effect of the photograph, and the mortars get a "Course" on their

Old Brass.

PLATE XXVIII.

Old Copper.

PLATE XXIX.

own. You will notice some Scotch thistle-shaped measures; for these I am indebted to a young friend who travelled a good deal, and often came back from Scotland with pewter, brass, or copper. The measures are stamped "Four gills," "Pint," "Gill," "Half-Gill."

Among the brass I hope you will be able to distinguish two uncommon snuff-boxes. One is called "the Horn of Plenty," and is very old, while the other is hexagonal in shape, is made of cherry wood and brass, and was originally owned and used by Sir Ernest Shackleton's grandfather. The brass lamp with two snake handles must have special mention. Inside, fitted on a thin wooden circle, there are ten small metal cells, each fitted with a match-head, also a piece of wick and tallow; by pressing the handles together the disc makes a slight turn, striking the match against a jagged fitting, and stopping under the hole, through which the light would (I suppose) burn, until the cell was empty. This was patented about eighty years ago when matches were first invented, but I do not anticipate many were sold, as when all the lights had been burnt a fresh fitment would have to replace the one exhausted, a rather expensive affair.

Tacking brass and copper on to the many other specialities I have gone in for may cause the remark that had I confined myself to a more limited sphere I might have had a finer result in fewer classes, but that would have curtailed the pleasurable excitement of my rambles. Then again, when once you get the collecting fever you are not likely to get the better of it; it is far more likely to get the better of you, and I am of opinion it is better

so, provided you do not let it obtain an undue hold on your pocket. It is undoubtedly hard at times to say "No," but it is more difficult to get rid of a bad bargain. It is a singular trait of character, not altogether limited to collectors, which impels the individual to tell everyone when he secures anything cheap but constrains him to be as close as an oyster when he is done with a "dud," yet the best tales usually most enjoyed by the hearers are those which tell against the teller.

As regards the copper I am rather afraid of giving a wrong designation to the lipped pan with wood handle. It may have been a posset pot, or a beer-warmer, possibly it was used for both purposes, though not at the same time. The conical shaped warmer would put the pot to bed, as it would heat the mulled ale much quicker by being pushed down to the bottom of the fire, and, what was of more consequence in those days, it held more. The straight measure with a slot cut out at the top bears the inscription "Standard I Pint of the Corporation of Wexford Anno 1810" and is twice stamped "G.R. III." When I bought it I was assured by the broker that he could swear it was genuine as he knew the man who fetched it out of Wales. I bought this "eneuch measure," as a French visitor once called it to me, on January 1, 1910, and I remember wondering if this find augured well for the New Year from the collecting point of view, and it turned out quite a prosperous one.

There is a peculiar pewter half-pint Glasgow measure with copper top fitted with an overflow pipe, so that not a drop of the precious liquor would be lost. The two-handled measure is stamped "One-Pint," so also is the

pedestal-shaped one next to it. I do not know the trade name for the four measures with bell mouthpieces or pouring spouts, but I found them and the fine jug at one shop Bolton way. The small funnel is provided with a strainer. There are two powder-flasks on the top and two snuff-boxes on the bottom shelf. What sort of spectacles ever fitted into that heavy spectacle case? But one may conjecture everlastingly with these queer old relics of bygone days and ways.

FOURTH COURSE

Old Mortars

I SHALL only indulge in a short preliminary canter on this course as there are few competitors, and the chances of gaining a prize in this field are rather remote. I was not long before I had bought several bronze mortars, all plain, as I did not know fancy ones existed.

No. 1.—When I found this and bought it, I sent a photograph to the editor of the *Chemist and Druggist*, telling him it had been dredged up from the Liverpool Docks. He submitted the photograph to an expert, and reproduced the photograph in his paper in 1908 with the following remarks:

" Here we have the new Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith in effigy, on a two or three century old mortar. The left projecting wing shows a profile very like that of Mr. Asquith. The firmly sealed lips probably represent the receptive condition of his mind when the suggestions of subjects for new taxation fall upon his ear, and the features between the profile may, perhaps, bear some resemblance to the horrified expression worn by brewery directors, and those interested in the ' Trade ' generally, on the morning following the introduction of the Licensing Bill. The type is Portuguese or Spanish, and probably of the sixteenth or seventeenth century. The projections, which so resemble a human profile are a feature of this type of Mortar."

Size 5 in. diameter, 3½ in. high, weight 4 lbs.

This was encouraging, but put me out of conceit with the plain ones with which I had stocked myself.

The Mortars illustrated are mostly of very uncommon types, and as such specimens are seldom met with I hope their inclusion will be found of interest to the reader whose fancies may run in other directions. For after all, rareness and scarcity are great factors to collectors.

No. 2.—Bronze. I had great difficulty in deciphering the lettering and figures on this owing to wear. They are in two lines, and read " W. aged 69. 74 years Mary and Thomas." No doubt husband and wife, " W " being the initial letter of their surname. 4½ in. across the top, 4½ in. high, weight 4 lbs.

No. 3.—Bronze. This has upon it a fleur-de-lis, and mitre ornament and would no doubt be seventeenth century. 5½ in. across the top, 4½ in. high, weight 3 lbs.

No. 4. — Bronze. Is a very unusual type in that it has only one handle, while the ornament is artistic. I noticed, soon after I bought this, that an old one-handled metal mortar had been fished up from the Spanish Armada wreck, in Tobermory Bay. 5 in. across top, height 4 in., weight 3 lbs. 2 oz.

No. 5 is made of bright yellow metal. It is 5 in. in diameter, 4 in. high, weighs 3 lb., and has been well finished. Its decoration consists of " C.R." repeated four times, crowned Tudor-rose, thistle, trefoil, and crowned heart, each divided by a small fleur-de-lis. It was no doubt made by a loyal workman at the restoration of Charles II., and is, I hope, unique. I had trouble when negotiating the purchase, as through a side-slip I divulged

that the initials of Charles Rex were the same as my own. Further, the holder was convinced that this mortar had belonged to " the Royal Culinary Department, and was almost worth its weight in gold." In the end he was converted and evidently satisfied, for he foraged around and gave me an old pestle *after* I had paid the money.

No. 6 is bronze, $5\frac{1}{4}$ in. in diameter at the top, 4 in. high, and weighs $4\frac{1}{2}$ lb. When roaming about Kendal on an Easter Sunday I found this standing among " Roman " antiquities in a shop. I bought it on Easter Monday, and am still wondering how old it really is, and how many centuries the antiquary was out in his reckoning. Its appearance in every way indicates great age.

No. 7 is a bronze mortar 6 in. in diameter, $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. high, weighs $6\frac{1}{4}$ lb., bears the letters $\frac{\text{H}}{\text{W S,}}$ also 1735, and is the only dated mortar I possess. It belonged to an old Lancashire family named Hartley. W and S " rang off " some time since, and their Christian names were not ascertained.

No. 8 is the largest and heaviest bronze mortar I have. It is 7 in. in diameter, $5\frac{1}{2}$ in. high, and weighs 13 lb. The decoration is very crude, and I was puzzled as to the meaning until I turned it upside down, when a ram's head and a shell were evident. In this position the shape takes the form of a bell, and indicates that the makers would use the same mould for bells as for mortars at the period about 1650. I found this just across the Welsh border in Flintshire and had a hard time.

No. 9.— This " Goblet " is a most unusual shape for a brass mortar, and the metal is quite yellow. I was

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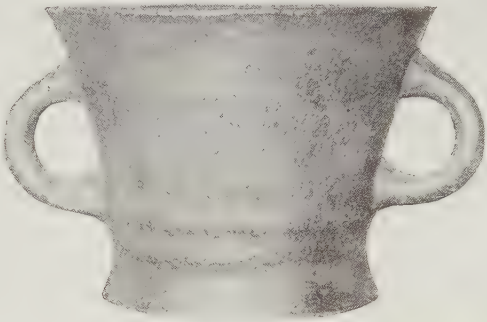
Old Mortars.

PLATE XXX.



6

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10

Old Mortars.

PLATE XXXI.

pleased when I found it, and more so when the owner gladly gave it me in exchange for three plain ones of the usual pattern. 4½ in. across top, 5 in. high, weight 4 lbs. 4 ozs.

No. 10. is 7 in. in diameter by 4¼ in. high. After acquiring this I ascertained that the difference between alabaster and marble is that the former is of a softer nature, which accounts for the head of the old pestle being worn to 1½ in. One of the four lugs is grooved for convenience when pouring out fluid mixtures—no doubt the innovation of an up-to-date cash chemist of that go-ahead period.

I have another of an exactly similar character, but 12 inches in diameter, while it has no groove, and an old Waterford glass pestle is with it. The pestles belonging to the metal mortars are all of different patterns.

FIFTH COURSE

Old Pottery

A Contrast in Prices—Bethel, Wesley, and Whitfield—Blue and White Plates—Salt Glaze—The Cobbler's Wife Upstairs—Toby Jugs—Doubts and Uncertainties—Liverpool—The Letter "P"—Vanishing Transfer Printing—Sunderland—Don Pottery—The Useful Mark—A Tuppenny Don—Turner (Lane Ends)—The Worth of a Ladle—Wedgwood—Jasper Ware—Tortoiseshell—Evolution—Puzzle Jugs—Experiments and Remarks—Brown and Buff Stoneware—Nelson Jugs—Contrast and a Caution—Mask Jugs—Advice and an Explanation—Delft—Plates—A Candlestick "Sauceboat"—Rockingham—The Cadogan Pot—The Snufftaker—Lustre—"All is not gold that glisters"—Dating—Wood, Enoch, and Ralph—A Bust, a Mould, a Word—Notes on the Groups—Pretty Poetry Printed on Pottery—The Willow Pattern—Solving a Problem.

POTTERY opens a wide course, gives much chance of success, finds scope for research and discrimination, and has also the advantage of not taking up much room, so the collector can usually hang on to anything he may fancy. In hunting for antiques you get exercise, a certain amount of excitement, and a great deal of uncertainty. It is a fine school for cultivating patience which repays you in the long run. I have times innumerable gone out of my way to pass a certain shop, to be rewarded, quite recently, by finding half a dozen blue and white pottery plates of a pattern I have wanted for years. This was doubly consoling, for my previous purchase there was broken in my pocket. In doing my own collecting of

pottery I have had many strange experiences, and several of the pieces have some interesting incident associated with their coming into my possession. As they total over 250 specimens the reminiscences make good reflections, while the finding, tracing, naming and arranging for show on shelves or whatnots to the best advantage has enabled me to pass many and many an hour pleasantly, and the result is always gratifying.

Whenever I chance to be from home I make it a part of my programme to do the old shops; sometimes the old shops do me, but not often. I recently went round the shops of a seaside town and drew a blank, but I saw a jug dated 1806 which I liked. On handling it I was informed it was an old Staffordshire farmer's jug, with farm implements painted on. The price was £10, and they had already refused £6. I felt uneasy until I had put the jug back on the shelf. In contrast to that, in almost the last inland town I visited by road we pulled up near a second-hand place and the first thing I noticed was a quaint-shaped, very early Staffordshire jug, hand painted, with blue band and some floral decoration, and so I went in. Blowing off the dust which other collectors had failed to disturb, although the town is their hunting-ground, I was told I could have it for a shilling as it was a bit snipped at the bottom. I bought that jug, and I should have been quite ready and pleased to buy the other at a reasonable price. My plough jug cost me five shillings in 1911; it is not dated, but may possibly be prior to 1806.

Soon after I set up in the pottery line I espied an old two-handled Wesleyan loving cup, with "BETHEL"

PLATE XXXII

DESCRIBING THE POTTERY

Shelf 6. Wesley. Whitfield by Enoch Wood, Loving Cup.

Shelf 5. Light blue enamelled Jug by Ralph Wood in centre, other four Jugs early Staffordshire.

Shelf 4. See notes on Wedgwood (page 103).

Shelf 3. Wood "Ivory" plate. Two Nelson Jugs (see page 106). Two blue printed Staffordshire.

Shelf 2. Railway Mug, Sunderland Frog Mug, Loving Cup, Staffordshire Tam-o'-Shanter Frog Mug, Cock-fighting Mug.

Shelf 1. Black printed "Prodigal Son" Mug, Milk Bowl, Jugs: George IV., Grace Darling, Disraeli and Earl of Derby, Gladstone and John Bright. Princess Royal Mug.

Old Pottery.

PLATE XXXII.

Old Pottery.

PLATE XXXIII.

PLATE XXXIII

DESCRIBING THE POTTERY

Shelf 5. Toby (Davenport). The Brewer. The Cobbler's Wife. The Squire. Hearty Good Fellow (see page 95).

Shelf 4. Toby Pepper Pots. Judy Jug. Toby (Davenport). Uncle Toby (early). Brewer. Tobacco Jar. Toby and Clown Pepper Pots.

Shelf 3. Brown Glazed Rockingham. Cottage Pastille Burner. Cadogan Pot. Snuff Taker. Lizard Mug. Boot Bottle (see page 107). Harvester's Bottle (Davenport). Plates —Brameld, Rockingham. Mason's Ironstone China.

Shelf 2. Lustre (see notes on page 107).

Shelf 1. Lustre (see notes). Plates: Wedgwood, Queen's Ware, Lug and Feather border (1790), Minton (early), Minton (*circa* 1810) (see page 132). Parian Ware (green).

painted on the sides in black. While I was examining the mug an elderly gentleman came in from the back room and the following enlightening conversation ensued :

Moderato : Good afternoon.
Eh ?

Crescendo : How much for the mug ?
Thruppence.

Forte : Where did it come from ?
Thruppence.

Fortissimo : How old do you consider it ?
Thruppence.

Piano : Oh, help !

I saw the figure of " Wesley over the Clock " in a small grocery window, and on asking if it was for sale was told " Yes ! We are sick to death of seeing him on the mantel "—and then bang went saxpence.

After these reckless purchases it is consoling to remember that the bust of Whitfield by Enoch Wood was given me by a neighbour who fished it out of his lumber room. (*See* Plate XXXII).

I purchased several pieces at odd times from a man who spoke Yiddish to his wife and broken English to me, and no matter whether the article was Wheildon, Wedgwood, or Worcester, he invariably assured me " It was a fine bit of old Zwanzee."

On the shelves round two of my rooms I have some quite uncommon dark blue printed plates and dishes, some unmarked, others by Rogers, Challenor, Adams, Spode, Davenport, Turner, also part set of a dinner service with fine illustrations of Pera, Mosque in Latachia, Triumphal Arch, Latachia, Pillar of Absalom. I also

have the tureen, which illustrates Eski-Estamboul. One of the dishes is marked " B " and they can with safety be attributed to the Burtons of Hanley, 1820.

A dish in rich blue, illustrating Little Boy Blue blowing his horn for the cows in the meadow and the sheep in the corn ; I fail to identify the cow and surmise that on this particular farm these animals must have been very much alike. I espied the rim of this dish nearly hidden on the shelf of a broker and I enquired, " Is that a blue and white dish ? " and was answered, " Yes, but it's more than you'll pay, we are saving that for a swell who comes in a motor-car." After this, of course I had to see it, and ascertaining the price paid up at once. I left my name and address and they promised to let me know if they got anything more like it. A few weeks later I received a postcard and caught the earliest train in great expectancy, to find on my arrival a few Willow Pattern dishes. I left these to swell the swell motorist's collection.

Never mind the absence of marks on the back, for if you desire to decorate you want good illustrations, and these are the main consideration. When a visitor, after contemplating these plates for a time, remarks, " I like your Willow Pattern " when there is no Willow Pattern on view, I usually change the subject and switch on to domestics, as I find so many people are on the look out for these, and I gather from the conversation that in collecting them they have the greatest difficulty in finding good specimens to add lustre and charm to the home.

PLATE XXXIV

DESCRIBING THE POTTERY

Shelf 6. Puzzle Jugs, Staffordshire. Pantomime and Harlequin. Leeds black-printed. White, apprentice "G. B." (see page 105).

Shelf 5. Fulham. Doulton Jubilee. Two Brownstone Ware Puzzle Jugs. Copeland Jug. Briddon Salt (see page 108).

Shelf 4. Staffordshire: Mask Spout. Barrel Jug. Harlequin. Early Mason. Swansea Mask Spout. Bacchus Mask Jug. Black face Mask Jug.

Shelf 3. Early Staffordshire: Wellington and Hill. Whieldon Cottage. Nelson and Hardy. Relief pattern two Jugs.

Shelf 2. Staffordshire. "Sportive Innocence." "Freemason's Arms. Blue decoration in the centre. Two Coloured Jug. Wood and Cauldwell.

Shelf 1. Sunderland. Wear Bridge, pink. Ship, yellow. Staffordshire. Lodge of Orangemen Jug. "Jovial Boatman." Queen Caroline Jug.

Old Pottery.

PLATE XXXIV.

Old Pottery.

PLATE XXXV.

PLATE XXXV

DESCRIBING THE POTTERY

Shelf 6. Liverpool (see page 99).

Shelf 5. Early hand-painted Mug. Charity. Washington Cup and Saucer. Herculaneum. Pennington. Stage Coach. Early Painted (see page 99).

Shelf 4. Leeds Plate in Delft colours. Staffordshire Jug. Yellow Enamelled Jug. Salt glaze: Delft Dish. Castor Oil Spoon. Whieldon (?) Jug. Small lustre painted Jug. (see page 94). Early Spode. Aynsley's Stone China. Don Pottery Bowl and Plate (see page 102).

Shelf 3. Three Delft Plates, one semi-porcelain (see page 107). Jackfield Sugar Bowl. Castleford Teapot. Plough Jug. French Candlestick. Mazarine Blue Jug " S.'

Shelf 2. St. Peter. Lustre painted Jug. Blue printed. Mason blue printed. Leeds Mug. Fox-head Cup. Plate: " Poor Richard's Maxims." Leeds Spill-holder. Davenport Jug. Bristol blue (marked) Jug. Swansea Rabbit. Bristol Toy Teapot. Rat Catcher's Daughter. Medicine Measure, double-ended, " Two tablespoonsful " and " One tablespoonful." The two end figures are translucent.

Shelf 1. Wedgwood Centenary, Early Mason. Oddfellow's Jug. T. Clare (1805). Davenport Presentation Jug. Davenport chocolate and black.

SALT GLAZE

Readers who are familiar with salt glaze will not be surprised when I say that the four pieces shown on Plate XXXV are all that I have fit to be trotted out, and they will probably not be taken aback when I confess to having been absolutely bewildered for some time in distinguishing this class of pottery. I read of £50 being given at, I think, the Bemrose Sale for a little ugly group, and I felt a desire to find something of this sort, though at a somewhat less fancy price. I poked in many a dusty cupboard, and messed myself up continuously for a time, until one day in an auctioneer's stock-room I dug out a white coffee pot with a pewter lid which I felt sure was salt glaze. When the auctioneer told me I could have it for two shillings if it was any good to me, I thought how little he knew of his business. It takes two to make a bargain, and he was not the fool. I found the coffee pot *was* salt glaze, but only about fifty years old, so it is again hidden away in a cupboard. I had looked at bits of salt glaze in glass cases under lock and key, so I think of presenting this piece to some museum where, owing to its comparatively small value, visitors may be allowed to touch and examine it under a magnifying glass, but I should first have it labelled, "Caution to Collectors—this is the class of salt glaze to avoid." This dud purchase turned out to be rather fortunate than otherwise, as after winking at it for a week I went carefully through my collection and found three salt glaze pieces which had remained unidentified for two years past. They are,

a jug painted and gilded over the glaze, and which I had bought in my ignorance in Wakefield; a little crudely painted lustre Staffordshire jug, which I caught busy catching the drips from a paraffin tap and secured for a trifle; and a blue painted castor-oil spoon.

Later I added a salt glaze delft dish with mark showing it was made by Petit of Lille, about 1788, which proves that the statement made in more than one book on old pottery that no delft was salt glazed is incorrect. This particular dish came from Sir J. D. Forest's collection.

Anyone with a Castleford teapot will be struck with its likeness to salt glaze. I happened on one in a town where the manufacture of heavy chemicals is very evident in the atmosphere, and the brokeress said she had been told that the teapot was "salt-*cake*." The same good old lady was once kind enough to invite me to step up to her bedroom, and a very nice room it was, its cleanliness, contents and comfort being greatly at variance with the shop and store-room below. Among the ornaments of which she offered me the choice was a fine "Cobbler's Wife," 12 inches high, probably Rockingham, which she had bought at a sale, and was pleased to part with at a profit. I have searched for years for the "Cobbler," but have failed to trace him. If anyone knows his present address, and will communicate with the author, they will be suitably rewarded.

TOBY JUGS (*See* Plate xxxiii)

None of these Toby jugs have any maker's names on them, but I believe the large and small of the same design are by Davenport. "The Squire" appears to

be the oldest, but whether it or the "Hearty Good Fellow" is the most valuable from a collector's point of view I cannot say, and I will tell you why. My first impression of "The Squire," which I obtained through a window, was "What a beauty!" I had seen a letter in the *Connoisseur* just before giving a photograph of one like it, so I was on the alert at once. Enquiry elicited the information that the dealer thought it was really old, that he bought it off a man who looked through the shop door, then went away and came back when the dealer was disengaged. "I didn't know the man; apparently he was hard up—wouldn't give any name, but he wanted a sovereign, so I gave it him, and you can have the jug for twenty-five shillings."

I have heard of a dog having a bad name, though Toby isn't a bad name for a dog, but I soon came up against a Toby with a bad name. On mentioning to my late friend the collector-dealer my purchase of "The Squire," what I had given for it, and where I bought it, he said he was sorry to hear it. He had seen that Toby and would not touch it, as he had been warned against it by another dealer, and if I wished for another like it he could give me an address in the Potteries where I might get one for 3s. 11d. The next time he was at my house he was hard to convince that he was mistaken; but when I told him I had shown it to a practical potter, who cautioned me that if I filled it with water I must not carry it by the handle, as it was partly perished with age, he gave in. Not long after I chanced to meet near home a well-known dealer who had just come from Harrogate to attend

a sale of antiques in our neighbourhood and who enquired of me the way. I asked him to have lunch with us and offered to drive him to the sale later. I am afraid this was rather diluted hospitality, for I was desirous of having his opinion of, among other things, "The Squire." After careful examination he pronounced it genuine, but he seemed to fancy the "Hearty Good Fellow" more.

When I first saw the "Hearty Good Fellow" it was in a window mainly given up to the display of modern ironmongery, and on enquiring the price was disappointed to hear it was sold and that a man was calling for it later. Then I said, "Ask him what he will take for his bargain, and don't you part with it." I am not sure how much I slept that night, but I know I called on my way to business, and I spent a bright and happy morning with the "Hearty Good Fellow" on my desk.

I had an amusing experience when purchasing "Uncle Toby," for when the dealer asked me 25s. I was able to say (having had a look at the bottom of the jug) that it was marked in ink 15s. When I showed him this he let himself go, and if the female assistant—who was not about at the time—had heard one tithe of the forcible expressions of opinion in which he held her business acumen, she would have gone into service straight away, for among her qualifications he considered she was more fit for cooking potatoes in their jackets. I refer to this gentleman elsewhere as having some temper, but on this occasion I waited patiently until he had come down to nearly normal, bought some

PLATE XXXVI

DESCRIBING THE POTTERY

Shelf 5. Bowl (Staffs.). Bristol Deft Dish. Bowl, Early Transfer (Staffs.). Willow Sauce-boats.

Shelf 4. Dish (Rogers). Tureen (Turner, Lane Ends). Dish, "Mosque in Latachia."

Shelf 3. Dish, "Little Boy Blue." Dish, purple (Challenor). Early Mustard Pots.

Shelf 2. Fruit-server. Vegetable Dish, "Pillar of Absalom" and Sauce-boat (Burton). Early Sauce-boat and Stand in one piece, transfer printed over the glaze. Turner Pickle-holder. Plates: "The Whatlands." "Pera."

Shelf 1. Plates. Davenport. W. Adams. Sauce-boat Stands "B" and "Arundel Castle." Willow Leaf Dishes and Early Pickle-holder.

Pictorial Pottery.

PLATE XXXVI.

Willow Pattern.

PLATE XXXVII.

other things, and got " Uncle Toby " at the price (15s.) on which he still sits.

Toby teapots must be scarce. I have seen none other, except in 1915, when I noticed two in a shop window on the Pantiles at Tunbridge Wells. I obtained mine through the death of an old lady who lived in our locality.

LIVERPOOL POTTERY (*See* Plate xxxv)

To identify all the Liverpool pottery one may come across as being made in Liverpool is wellnigh impossible ; the various factories seem each to have had some special features, while many of the jugs are very like those made by old Staffordshire firms. I say this partly by way of apology, as it is more than likely I have put under this group some jugs made elsewhere, and the same remark may apply to odd jugs in the Staffordshire group ; but as I am not out to sell the things I cannot see that I lay myself out to any serious charge of misrepresentation. If you are of a different opinion, then I must plead that I have no fraudulent intent.

Away back in the days beyond recall an authority on this subject very kindly came out here and named my specimens as far as he could, but I notice among the labels I had then affixed the word " probably " sometimes appears before the name given. I was somewhat disappointed with the result of his visit, for he pronounced some of the jugs which I had hoped were Liverpool as not coming within that family, so I have decided to be my own judge in future, as by that means I may in time have one of the largest collections of " Old Liver-

pool" in the country. As those I include will be so near in appearance to some of the varieties made, I am hoping no collector will have reason to dispute my classification. Only one jug is marked, and that has a letter "P," which denotes Pennington, and I spotted this mark without a suspicious dealer—to whose astuteness I refer later on—being aware of the fact, and so I got it for 3s., which is not an excessive price considering it is hand painted with line decoration, an uncommon design, and bears a very rare mark.

Collectors should be careful how they clean Old Liverpool which has been printed over the glaze, for I remember on one occasion I gave a sovereign for a jug with pictures done in brown which had a smudgy look. The dealer was a straight man, and said if I was not satisfied he would give me my money back. When I got home and filled the bathroom hand-basin with hot water and soda and began cleaning, I thought what a dirty condition the jug must be in, for the water soon began to look like brown ink. I thought it was time to probe deeper, and to my alarm found the picture still blurred, but not so dark in colour, and then I thought I was "done in brown"! I saw the dealer and told him all about it. When he asked was I not satisfied, I admitted I was not altogether enamoured with the running thing, and that it was the pictures by the Old Master I placed such value on, so he laughingly returned the money.

A collector from the south came along soon after and gave the dealer more than the even sovereign. My only wonder is how many times that jug has

been washed since, and how much of the pictures remain.

A jug 8½ inches high shows "King William, Prince of Orange," on horseback, and on the reverse side a print of Britannia and Erin throttling a snake coiled round a broken pillar, also the words "Great Britain and Ireland United MDCCC." One 7-inch jug has an heraldic illustration headed "The Cooper's Arms," and on the reverse side a lion and anchor surmounted by "Great Britain and Ireland United 1800." A specially fine specimen of Herculaneum pottery is the 7½-inch jug of uncommon pattern which gives the "Duke of York" and "Prince Coburg" in relief, and this jug is painted in the old delft colours, brown, yellow, orange and blue. The cups and saucers bear portraits of Washington and Lafayette; they must have missed the American boat over a hundred years ago, or I should not have found them in Wigan, and they were un-undoubtedly made for the American market.

SUNDERLAND (*See* Plate XXXIV)

Many of these jugs and mugs are very quaint, but it is to me impossible always to identify them. One evidently commemorates the opening of the cast-iron bridge over the River Wear on August 9th, 1796. The fact that maritime subjects were often used for illustration assists in deciding sometimes, so I include the frog-mug. Lake lustre and yellow lustre were largely used, the colours being brushed on in a careless way.

DON POTTERY (*See* Plate xxxv)

So much pottery was made without indication of its origin that it is well for a collector when he comes across a marked piece cheap, even if it is imperfect, to procure it. In 1915 I bought a pedestal oval-shaped bowl which bears the distinction of being the only piece in my collection which did not cost me more than 2d. It looked as if it had spent half its long life in an oven and most of the remainder in being knocked about, for both handles were off. I saw it was impressed "Don Pottery" and knew it would be made in Leeds about 1780, that it bore traces of being printed in black transfer at Liverpool, that it had been banded black by hand, and that the colour of the ware was of a dark grey cast. In June, 1919, I saw the uncommon plate shown in this group bearing many features tallying with the Don Pottery bowl but in perfect condition (unmarked), having also a silver lustre band, and on comparing these pieces satisfied myself they both came from the same factory. Such finds as these, trifling though they may be, help to make collecting a pastime.

TURNER LANE ENDS (*See* Plate xxxvi)

In 1911, in an old shop at Prescot, near the house in which Kemble lived, I discovered a well-printed blue-and-white dish impressed "Turner" and bought it, finding a place for it on the shelf over the mantel. Three years after I was in a manufacturing town 25 miles away looking about, and in a sort of a marine store window noticed a tureen (unmarked) with ladle com-

plete which matched my Turner dish. Enquiring the price, the woman said "she didn't know," and "he was out." So I asked her to fetch "him." When "he" arrived, somewhat fuddled, I asked him the price, and on getting his answer remarked it seemed a bit stiff, when he huffily and huskily replied, "Why, the —— ladle's worth the money," and left me straightaway. With an assurance like that from such an authority I decided to buy. I knocked, and my lady friend appeared again and anxiously put the question:

"Did you pay him?"

"No."

"That's a good thing; I'll have the money."

The tureen has since adorned my mantel, and it might have been a part of the same set as the dish. I recently found at a Red Cross sale a little pickle-holder to match. I once priced a larger dish of the same pattern, but owing to the difficulty of getting it home left it, and the next time I was in that town it had been sold.

WEDGWOOD (*See* Plate xxxii)

Josiah Wedgwood must have been a wonderful man, and I am pleased to have a portrait of him on a jug bearing his name on a scroll with the dates "1730 to 1795." I believe this to be a Centenary piece, and as his works started in 1752 the jug will be about seventy years old. I have seen so much of Wedgwood's Jasper Ware that I have refrained from buying any, but I show two small pieces—a really old pepper-pot and a sugar bowl (part of a set here)—which I did not col-

lect. Early on I placed the teapot, sugar bowl, and cream jug in my china cabinet, but as so many visitors after running their eyes over my rarer specimens usually remarked, "I see you have some Wedgwood," I put them out of sight. This Jasper Ware has had a tremendous sale for years and years, and is better known than its age. For these three things I substituted a Jasper spill vase, and many a spill has been caused by the knowing ones calling this Wedgwood, when it is not.

I have been lucky in finding some early specimens of Wedgwood—a plate impressed "Pearl," printed but touched up by hand, a pair of tortoise-shell (back and front) plates with raised daisy and bead border. One plate, octagonal shape, cupids dancing in centre, with a remarkable light and shade effect, with oak-leaf relief border, and having a fine tortoise-shell back. All these are heavy and have "Wedgwood" stamped in large type, so they will date 1760 to 1765. These are followed by a Cream-ware plate, partly hand coloured, and a little later by a plate of a whiter shade giving a brown printed view of sailing vessels in harbour. These have the impressed mark in smaller type. Two little teapots, one black basalt and the other bisque pattern, about 1780, complete this interesting group.

Another excellent specimen of Queen's Ware will be seen on shelf No. 1, Plate XXXIII. This bears the early large type Wedgwood impressed mark, and has the lug and feather border carefully painted in brown and red over the glaze. As my ten plates—two of which were given me—have cost me just half the price I

was once asked for a single cracked tortoise-shell plate, I conclude I have been working on right lines.

PUZZLE JUGS (*See* Plate xxxiv)

With the intention of describing to the reader the peculiarities of these jugs and the difference in the puzzles, I have just had the six filled with water to experiment with so that I might give lucid explanations of the enigmas, and I have been most successful —in making myself wet. That the investigation should be complete, I obtained the assistance of a young friend who revels in logarithms and abstruse problems, and as I noticed signs of his temper giving way under his many efforts to elucidate the why and the wherefore of these strange devices and their tricky behaviour, the enquiry is postponed *sine die.*

Of the two brown stoneware jugs the one with figures in relief hails from Brampton, and the other would have been made in some local pottery. The tall, fancy shape is a good specimen of those made at Leeds. The one with the pantomime group would be made in Staffordshire about eighty years ago, while the Harlequin jug was the work of Elsmore and Forster, about 1850. The white jug is the oldest of the tribe, and I should be surprised to hear of another like it being in existence. I fancy this to be the work of an industrious apprentice to show what a clever hand he was, and that the letters "G. B." scratched on the bottom under the glaze will be his initials I wish he had not given in his tally before he had added a date.

NELSON JUGS (*See* Plate xxxii)

The jug almost covered with blue printing is a fine specimen, showing Nelson, the *Victory*, and a list of his titles and his battles, together with his famed last signal and some eulogy. The jug with Nelson in relief bears on the reverse side a likeness of Hardy, and it is in such good condition that I believe the party I bought it from in Liverpool thought it was a reproduction, while I felt quite satisfied that it was a specially well preserved antique. The black printed jug is a disreputable-looking relic, and when found it appeared as if it had been in the battle of Trafalgar instead of commemorating the fight, for the jug had "got it in the neck" and had lost its handle. As the printing was all there I decided to salve it, and after going into dry dock it came out looking quite spick and span. Dampness, followed by a spell of hard frost, penetrating where it was berthed, shivered its timbers, and so you see the paint and enamel coming off. I give this as a warning to any collector who may pay about half a sovereign to get a piece of old pottery overhauled to ever after keep it in a warm, dry place and not to touch it unless compelled.

MASK JUGS (*See* Plate xxxiv)

My advice is, if you can buy old jugs like these two at a reasonable price, do so. You would not be able to see the handle of the one which faces the audience if it were in profile, for some "daft budy" had knocked it off before I came along.

DELFT (*See* Plate xxxv)

An amateur will find it difficult to get to know this when he finds it, but he will find it still more difficult to find it before he gets it. I think something of what I have, especially one 9-inch plate with coloured design, Liverpool Fazakerley pattern, and someone must have thought quite a lot of it before I gave a shilling for it, as they went to the trouble of breaking it and to the expense of having the pieces fastened together again with seventeen rivets. The two other coloured plates are not yet identified, while the hand-painted blue plate is semi-porcelain. The French candlestick, richly decorated by hand, bears the mark of Widow Perrin, of Marseilles, 1770. It was sold to me as a sauce-boat, and when I enquired the meaning of the chimney in the centre was answered, " How should I know ? "

A large Bristol Delft dish, blue painted, figures at the top of the pictorial pottery on Plate xxxvi.

Twentieth-century Dutch delft is not antique ; I have been where it was in the making in Holland and seen it on sale in old shops in England.

ROCKINGHAM (BROWN) (*See* Plate xxxiii)

I am fortunate in having a Cadogan pot impressed " Rockingham," as by comparing I believe I have only included brown ware made at this factory. Brown " Rockingham " snuff-taker jugs have been made elsewhere by the thousand.

LUSTRE (*See* Plate xxxiii)

I have chosen for this group what I consider the best of my bunch, which consists of gilt, copper, silver,

lake, brown, and yellow lustres. The only marked one shows that J. Aynsley was using lustre about 1800. My largest copper lustre jug bears the first owner's initials, " W.P., 1823," while the silver lustre cannon is lettered " Battle of Wagram, 1806," so I can only surmise that most of these exhibits were made in the first half of the nineteenth century. The main difference between the modern and old lustre ware is usually noticeable on the bottom of the pieces, the finish of the old being more carefully executed.

WOOD, ENOCH AND RALPH (*See* Plate xxxii)

All students or collectors of old pottery will be anxious to have authentic representations of the work of these early potters. I was lucky in having the bust of Whitfield given to me, and I am convinced this is genuine. I have tried to procure Enoch Wood's companion bust of Wesley, but the two I have had offered were reproductions, the features not being so sharp and the impress mark blurred and indistinct. Ralph Wood had a great reputation as an engraver of moulds, and this is certainly justified by my large light blue enamelled jug, impressed " Wood." I also show an early brown printed plate impressed " Wood " beside the word " Ivory," which plate will probably be contemporary with the Wedgwood " Pearl."

BROWN AND BUFF STONEWARE (*See* Plate xxxiv)

The Doulton Jubilee Jug dated 1887 is probably the most modern of the pieces photographed, but the small jug next it will make up for the matter of age if it is Old Fulham, as I believe it to be. The jug with

hunting scenes in relief is stamped Copeland, while the small " salt " with lion-head ends is by W. Briddon, and would be made in Chesterfield about 1770. This and the Fulham jug are salt glaze.

I have omitted to include a Spode buff mug with lion-head handle and blue rim giving " Wellington, with soldiers and a cannon " (9.2 in.), also a Continental tree with huge leaves in white relief commemorating the Battle of Vittoria, 1813.

TRANSFER PRINTING

Anyone interested in the evolution of this art would find in my collection enough specimens to point out the advancement as time went on, and evidence that not many years elapsed before the printing was all that it need to be. My earliest example is an irregular wavy edged 7½-inch plate, the glaze of which looks like thin tin enamel, and over this glaze there is a quaint picture of a woman and child in a garden under a palm tree, of course. To add to the impression that this is a very early effort at stipple printing on pottery there is a white line running nearly across the print, denoting the paper had either been torn or the blue ink had not entirely covered it. The plate is crazed all over like a fine spider's web. The sauce-boat described on Plate XXXVI as printed over the glaze, probably dates next, and then must come a study of a 10-inch cream-coloured ware soup-plate. This is not among the pieces photographed, as I have only just discovered its peculiarities, which, now they have secured my attention, strike me as remarkable. It is the heaviest plate of its size I

have, and weighs 1 lb. 9 oz.; it is well made, and is in good preservation. It is printed over the glaze with fern leaves and common English flowers, like poppies, lilies, and harebells, the stalks and foliage in green transfer, while the flowers are enamelled red and yellow by hand. With difficulty I have made out the mark to be an impressed crown, and this, together with the colour of the ware, satisfies me that it is an early piece of Herculaneum. It was pushed on to me nine years ago by a dealer, instead of a shilling change out of a sovereign, with the remark, "Perhaps you would rather take that plate," and I did not wish to disappoint him by declining anything he desired to be rid of. Readers will do well not to miss any transfer printing over the glaze, and the search for it will keep them busy.

NOTES ON THE GROUPS

I now come to the arranging of the groups of the many jugs and pieces which I know are worthy of being shown, and I find I am up against the difficulty caused by so few of the makers marking their wares. The advantages of the markings on pottery are twofold. In the first place, you get a guide to the age of the piece, also an idea of the class of work the maker mainly went in for. Secondly, you can guess at the age fairly well of pieces made by other makers who copied the designs. By the Cottage Jug I know I have some Whieldon, but how much more I cannot say, so I shall confine my efforts in this direction to the endeavour to make the photographs a guide as to age, and I believe I can show that the period from 1750 to 1850 is covered.

The style of the earliest specimens is so pronounced there is little difficulty in picking them out. The large jug with a farm-house painted on it bears on the front, " T. Clare, 1805," which helps me to fix the date of others with somewhat similar handpainting. Then the illustrations give a clue, for instance, the Duke of Wellington and General Hill, Nelson and Hardy, Princess Royal and Prince of Prussia, Queen Caroline of England, pictures of the stage coach, prize-fighting, cock-fighting, the first railway trains, Disraeli and the Earl of Derby, Gladstone and John Bright, George IVth died 1830, Grace Darling died 1842, and, to end the list happily, a plate, cup, and saucer printed in green, " Commemorating Sir W. W. Wynn attaining his majority 1841."

Photographic readers may be interested to know that I have used the same set of shelves for the pottery that I used for the metal subjects, but covered with brown paper for the former and white for the latter. A few of the light blue items are rather disappointing; these, of course, required less exposure than the darker colours, but I could not separate them all from the groups to which they belong. The groups have required six negatives, but they have had eight exposures. After the first six operations I sent the three slides to my developer, who reported Numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4 as " quite good," but Numbers 5 and 6 had " no plates in them," so the result failed to reach the high pitch of efficiency to which I had aspired. The groups had to be rearranged another day, and the slides chanced to be filled that time.

Pretty Poetry Printed on Pottery

Parents are advised, before compelling their children to commit the following gems from the jugs to memory, to insist on their repeating aloud the above title rapidly but accurately until they or their children are, so to speak, fed up.

On an " Oddfellows' jug," which holds about a gallon :

> Behold, Behold the Upright Band,
> In virtue's path go hand in hand,
> They shun each ill, they do no wrong,
> Strict honour does to them belong.

On a Sunderland jug, giving view of " Bridge over the River Wear " :

> Glide on my Bark, the Summer's tide,
> Is gently flowing side by side,
> Around thy prow the waters bright,
> In circling rounds of broken light,
> Are glittering as if Ocean gave,
> Her countless gems to deck the wave.

On a Sunderland jug, with picture of ship in full sail, titled, " True Love from Hull " :

> Kindly take this gift of mine,
> The gift and giver I hope is thine,
> And though the value is but small,
> A Loving heart is worth it all.

On a Sunderland " Frog mug," showing a black print of a man-of-war with all sails set :

THE FAIRY OF THE SEA

Ther's a frigate on the waters,
Fit for Battle's storm or fun,
She dances like a Lifeboat,
Though she carries Flag and Gun,
What 'er may try, she'll stand the test,
The brave, the staunch, the free,
She bears a name of stainless fame,
The Fairy of the Sea.

On a jug with print, touched up with colours, of a tavern called :

THE JOLLY BOATMEN

Let none John Barleycorn despise,
He makes the drooping spirits rise,
Then drink till all are satisfied,
But reason ever be your guide.

On a Queen Caroline jug :

May Loyal George and Caroline,
Agree to rule our nation,
And peace and happiness combine,
In every rank and station.

On a Staffordshire milk-bowl with a black printed farm scene :

GOD SPEED THE PLOUGH

We plough the fertile meadows,
And sow the furrow'd land,
But yet the waving harvest,
Depends on God's own hand,
It is His mercy give us
The sunshine and the rain,
That paints in verdant beauty,
The mountain and the plain.
Success to the Farmer.

On a Liverpool jug bearing a representation of "Charity":

Success to Commerce and Trade

The watery grave now opens,
All dreadful from below,
When the waves move the Sea,
And the stormy winds do blow,
But when the danger's over,
And safe we come on shore,
The horrors of the tempest,
We think of them no more.

On a Staffordshire jug, probably made by Daniels, and transfer printed with a picture of an old dandy, who has a paper headed "Oracle" on his knee, and whom the artist has crowned with a wig that would stuff a furnish-on-the-hire-system settee:

Long may we live,
Happy may we be,
Blessed with content,
And from misfortunes free.

On a small plate with a rim edged with red, which carries the alphabet in raised letters, I see a quaint print of two men, one holding his hat in his hand, the other has his right hand thrust in his vest, while the left is in the flap pocket of his knee breeches. There is, of course, a cow, one sheep, and a lamb. In the background there is a thatched roof covering some house from out of which a lady, who appears to have donned her shop-soiled sables, has brought into the road a stool and a spinning-wheel. She is sitting on the former while she works the latter. It is a quiet

road, and no motors are anticipated. The artist has wonderfully conveyed the idea that they are having a very warm time, and that the " Johnnies " are having a heated argument; further, it is the fly season, or why is the cow whisking her tail? It is a peaceful scene, for not a leaf stirs, and it is small wonder that the author has been carried away from his object, which was to report that at the top of the illustration there is printed:

POOR RICHARD'S MAXIMS

" Fly pleasure and it will follow you; the diligent spinner has a large shirt."

While at the foot every child can read:

" Now I have a sheep and a cow everybody bids me good morrow."

So I conclude the diligent spinner whose hands are hidden by his clothing is bothered by too large a shirt on this hot day, and that he is such a super-diligent spinner that he sees his wife does the spinning while he swanks about counting the cow, sheep, and lamb, and is accosted by an indigent acquaintance who is anxious to negotiate a loan—hence the heated argument.

WILLOW PATTERN (*See* Plate XXXVII)

Of course, everyone knows the Willow Pattern; if not, they fancy they do, and it was only natural that the first old looking dish I met with I bought. It was marked " stoneware K. & B "; there was also a small cross in blue. I couldn't find " K. & B." in the book I then had, but I found a cross was a Bristol mark,

so I concluded the dish was old Bristol, whereas it would be made by Knight and Bridgewood in Staffordshire. Then I bought other Willow Pattern plates and dishes, some marked on the back and some not, and found there were no two actually alike. On reference I found that the Willow Pattern was the original design of Thomas Minton, made for Thomas Turner, of Caughley, so I turn(er)ed to my guide books to look for a reproduction of the genuine picture, and I found each author showed photographs which differed in many particulars, but some specially recommended marks " C " or " S " and I surmise that we may take it that " C " is the most original of all the originals.

As I was growing older every day, and wished to solve this Anglo-Chinese problem for the benefit of a bewildered brain, I rambled farther afield, and at last discovered a dish marked " S," this being the mark of the Salopian works which were early in the market with this remarkable design. When I found another dish marked " S," I exchanged two of my mongrels for it, and I repeated this bargain when I found a third. I use the word " bargain " from the shopkeepers' point of view, as they would by my generous treatment receive double from their sale than they had previously expected. One of them told me I was too good-natured ever to be well off, and I think he was a man of keen perception of character, but it is disconcerting if a bank-book can be revealed by the face, or by the old Burberry worn on the back. Having a trio of the genuine article, each one " bought " at different places, on comparing I found the pictures identical, although the blue

varied slightly, and so I recommend the reader, if he is interested in this grave question, to study Plate XXXVII.

My cue is to look at the wagtails or love birds, and if the one on the off side is a cock and carries his wings perpendicularly, or if she is a hen and, after looping the loop, has also acquired the same wing position, which appears to be just the right one for billing and cooing, then it is about time for the collector to turn-er-over and see if there is anything more fascinating than a love story on the back of the piece.

To make myself doubly clear, and to remove any possible doubt whatsoever, I give an illustration of another Willow Pattern dish which has no mark, and is, to my mind, worth half a dozen of the " S " specimen as an antique, for it must be fifty years older, is a better shape, and a nicer blue. I obtained a pair of these from an auctioneer, one being broken in two, and whether I gave him three shillings for the whole one or for the whole lot I am uncertain, and so I cannot make up my pottery account, for I am unable to say the exact number of pieces I have bought. I rather think he sold me the whole one, and gave me the two halves; he certainly did not knock down the lot, or both the dishes would have been broken. With some stuff that is guaranteed to stick everything, on two occasions I joined the two halves, but each time they fell apart a while after. As the third time is like no other my reward for perseverance was that they held together until I nearly got the dish on the shelf, when half fell on the floor, broke in many pieces, and I dropped

the other on the top of them in disgust. I suppose those uneasy birds started carrying-on, and the cement did not have a proper chance to set.

I shall now have to photograph No. 2, and I must see those cuckoos maintain their present positions.

" Birdie, come here a minute and help me take a photo. You keep an eye on that off-side budgeregar, and see he doesn't budge, while I put a W.P. plate in the slide."

" Hurry up, dad—they're gliding."

" A'hem ! they've shifted—so like a bird to move ; it's a snapshot anyway."

A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, but when they are in the air, and you haven't got your gun, —well, there you are. Talk about Willow Pattern—but those flighty birds are no pattern.

I once collected a pair of love-birds in London, and fetched them home. I thought they would do well in the nursery to teach the young idea how to love. One day Mr. Lovebird got loose and flew about the room until at last he found a perch out of reach in a hook in the ceiling from which was suspended a swing. The hook was kept well greased, and what with friction and dust he could not have found a handier place for disguising himself as a blackbird. To get him down the nurse hit upon the brilliant idea of dipping a stick in treacle, and poking about with this to entice him down, with the result that he got treacled as well as vaselined. At length he was caught, and put under the bathroom tap by my better half, who was rewarded by having his beak through the best half of her thumb. When

I came home to lunch, on learning what had happened, I flew to the nursery, and then I saw something that looked akin to " L " on one end of the perch, looking very down in the feather, while Mrs. L. was at the other end. I enquired, " Lovey, why don't you get on with your loving." When swallowing a tear he answered, " She won't let me, cos I'm sticky." I said, " Oh, that's foolish ; if you love one another you should stick together whatever happens."

I gave them to a local bird dealer eventually, and the last I saw of them they were playing about with some rabbits. This man came up to cure a Plymouth Rock rooster which I thought had the gout ; he wrung its neck, and that is what I would like to do with those wriggling skylarks which have caused me all this trouble

* * * * *

" Hello—what's this ?" In reply the broker just said " Two." Of course he meant the price of the plate, but I referred to the portrait ; on my explaining he only answered, " Don't ask me." I felt sure it was intended for Tennyson, for although we writers are a bit jealous, we soon get to know one another. I wanted my impression confirmed, so I enquired of No. 1, " Who do you think this is ? " " Oh, that's Sir Stafford Northcote ; I can tell by his beard." No. 2 said it was " Garibaldi," judging by his necktie. Then I considered, who do I know who runs a beard, because anyone who flies a kite at this angle usually trims it *à la* somebody, and so I thought of my friend the librarian. He has plenty of whiskers on his face, a store of information

in his head, and much more on his shelves, and it's no use having a lot of shelves if you store everything in the brain. He thought it might be Tennyson and yet it had a look of Browning; it had rather too much beard for Tennyson. I pointed out that at intervals beards were usually trimmed, and he, whilst stroking his own, agreed with me. He kindly produced volumes which gave Tennyson from photographs, woodcuts, and steel engravings, taken at various times, and the beard seemed to change after each poem; in the end I came away firmly convinced it was Tennyson, and he didn't seem to mind who it was. I know that Tennyson was born in 1809, and the plate was made before 1867 by Copeland, otherwise the mark would be "Copeland and Son," so if we call the plate sixty years old, we find that the great poet was honoured by a halo of Willow Pattern when he was about fifty, and that is as near as one can guess to with such an illustration. I need hardly say that Tennyson was not the writer of that much-whistled and enticing poem "Tit-willow, Tit-willow, Tit-willow."

I thought I had done with Willow Pattern, but the arrival of Tennyson has caused a flutter in the dove-cot. When I came to arrange a photograph for this book I found he was out of place in any position for making an artistic group worthy to grace a standard work on the Willow Pattern such as this aspires to be. I therefore went through—or to be more accurate took up a position in front of—my collection, and seeing a set of Leeds bread dishes with beaded edges, found they were all too large. (By the

way,these have no warblers on their design.} Then I saw an oval pie-dish by Job Meigh and Son, and thought that was no match; next I caught sight of a pair of dishes by the so-called Wedgwood and Co. of Stockton-on-Tees, but neither of those would fit the space. A small pickled-onion holder, shaped like a flat-bottomed boat or barge, was hardly dignified enough, especially as the futurist artist had given his coots two wings and two tails each. I was on the point of throwing up the sponge—which, of course, I did not have with me—when I espied on the top shelf a hot-water plate with an antique cork in the hole. This I thought very suitable, for had I not heard an ode to the odour of a cork by a poet who had lost his licence? Also the lapwings looked fairly normal. Perhaps they were tired with having had such warm times and fidgeting about trying to find a cool corner on a round surface. Anyway, they did not look like nesting in that beard and thereby upsetting the growth of years.

I must decline to discuss the matter further.

SIXTH COURSE

Old China

Hard or Soft Lowestoft—"Won by Waiting"—Bow Bowls—Contrast in Prices—Changing Trains—Eye Openers—A Hidden Meaning—Photography—Bow—Chelsea—Lowestoft—Bristol—"T" and Crossed Swords—Tebo and Taboo—Minton—"Thereby Hangs a Tale," A Transparent Error—Swansea—The First Starter—"Woodbine"—Blue Dragons, and Green Ones—Worcester—Sauce and Sentiment—English Japanese—Some Temper—Some Difference—Newhall—The Broken Bowl—Camouflage—Physiognomy—Derby—Spode—Leeds—French Porcelain—What's in a Name?

ENOBARBUS said of Cleopatra, "Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale her infinite variety," and the sentiment embodied in this remark seems singularly applicable to china. Year after year it wears the same charm and beauty if taken care of, while we see evidence of its infinite variety every day. To the amateurs who are desirous of gathering together a collection let me remind them that "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing."

I was recently examining a teapot, the only mark on which was "25s." in ink, and on commenting on the price to a lady who was also looking round, was amused at her remark that "it did not seem excessive if it was either hard or soft Lowestoft." I did not argue the point, but it came into my mind that I had read that the furnaces at Lowestoft were never capable

China Cabinet, Mahogany, Late 18th Century.

PLATE XXXVIII.

Old China.

Shelf 4. Derby.
,, 3. Spode.
,, 2. Spode.
,, 1. Chelsea.

PLATE XXXIX.

of firing hard China. Moreover, I had seen an identical teapot in a shop about a mile away, and I have one almost identical labelled "Newhall" and marked "N" (*see* Shelf 3, Plate XLII, facing p. 136); also Lowestoft china is very scarce. I believe if all the china which has been, and still is being, offered as Lowestoft had been made at that small early factory it would have necessitated its being many times larger than Doulton's is to-day.

These remarks caused me to reflect on the difficulty I experienced in learning to distinguish between hard and soft china, as I had no desire to collect any but old English. I read that the surest way was to use a file, but I always feared antique dealers might resent my testing their stock in this effective manner, although it would have been a useful tip for some who have sold me pieces of Chelsea and called them Oriental. I have for some time been fitted with a thumb-nail of experience on which I have to rely. As illustrative of what may be "won by waiting" let me relate the following:

In the year 1912 I was in Harrogate and had a desire to acquire a blue-and-white china sauce-boat, and I found one which the dealer and I agreed must be Lowestoft. The price was high, but he advised me to buy, as I might not find another. Seven years after I was struck with the strange appearance of another blue-and-white sauce-boat which I bought for a nominal sum. I found it bore a faintly impressed mark, and this enabled me to identify it as made at Bow and printed at Battersea. This discovery led to another,

which I think worth recording. In 1912 among other pieces I purchased a triangular-shaped tray with fretted sides, and not being able to locate its origin said nothing when I found it had been appropriated for use in the bathroom as a receptacle for soap. When I had labelled the Bow sauce-boat, which was made of a thick body with a yellowish cast, I looked through my collection for anything like it and found a small blue-and-white saucer and the tray which had been desecrated with soap instead of decorated with sweetmeats and consigned to the risks of a bathroom instead of the safety of the display cabinet. Pursuing my investigation I turned out an oblong basket-work pattern dish with quaint fret edge and with every evidence of old age, which had been in my cupboard for nearly ten years, and then realised that it also was early Bow.

You will see on Plate xv a 9-inch Bow bowl of the famille rose design ; this appeared in an auctioneer's catalogue as " Oriental bowl " and was knocked down for half a crown to a broker who took a profit of one shilling from me for his bargain.

Here is another incident :

" Will you buy that bowl ? "

" Well hardly, but I don't mind making you a sporting offer for the rivets," I said.

These were the oldest type of rivets used for china I had seen, and they, with some very ancient shellac, held the two halves very firmly together. My offer was accepted, and I do not mind telling you the bowl is early Bow and the only piece with green in the decoration I have ever seen. (*See* Plate xv.)

I shall not attempt to place values on any of my specimens as it seems to me they are worth just as much as I could get for them, while the same theory holds good in buying.

I show on Plate XLI, Shelf 1, a cup and saucer which are marked with cross swords; the matched cup and saucer were sold to me by a dealer as Dresden for about 10s., whereas an odd saucer, also with cross swords (Shelf 3, Plate XLII), was sent to me marked "4d." with some other china, mostly rubbish, on approval. These three items might have belonged to the same set, and are excellent examples of the beautiful hand decoration turned out at Bristol about the end of the 18th century.

I was changing trains at a station and had some short time to wait, so I strolled into the principal street of a town that is constantly visited by dealers or their representatives, when I espied in a secondhand furniture shop a pair of hand-painted dark-blue lidded pots which at first glance I thought were Chinese ginger jars, and yet I desired to make closer acquaintance. On enquiring from the girl what was the price she shortly returned and said: "She has been asking three-and-six for them, but she will take two-and-six." The pots and lids were quite thick, and I could make nothing of them in the train; but when I got home, and in a dark room switched on the electric light, turned them round until I came to a part thin enough to be transparent, then by the cast of the paste I knew they were what I anticipated, real Old Worcester teapoys.

This reminds me of another adventure when I passed a shop on my way to catch a train, and noticed in the

window a blotchy blue and white teapot and felt sorry I was tied to time. About three months after, I had occasion to visit the town again, and my business being finished I went straight to that window, when to my joy the teapot was still there. A very short examination and I had made up my mind to have it although it was minus a lid.

On asking the price I was told 1s., but—bless their honesty!—they wouldn't guarantee it was old. That teapot will be found among my Lowestoft group and it is probably the earliest example.

I will here refer to the Liverpool teapot on Shelf 3, Plate XLI. I had travelled by train to a town about twenty miles off and there called in a shop kept by a man whom his most intimate acquaintances might have found to be one of the best, but to my mind had some of the Stone Age blood in him, for he was indeed a hard case. I asked how much for the teapot.

"Five shillings to you."

"Five shillings? Well, I'm sorry, but they ought not to have told you."

"What are you getting at?"

"I just thought you must know your number's up and that you are in training for the repentance stakes."

"No sir, but I'm pleased to see you, and to be able to offer you a bargain this time."

"Oh, thanks—I apologise."

When I was leaving with the teapot under my arm he added to his farewell, "You'd be surprised if you knew how little I gave for it."

This remark rankled, and I was no sooner in the

train than I carefully examined my purchase, when I found that the spout had been snapped off clean just where it entered the body of the pot, and had been carefully and neatly stuck in again, and so the mysterious outburst of genial generosity was revealed.

Blue and white takes my eye always, pulls me up every time, and I fancy myself fortunate in having so much of it in pottery and porcelain considering the means I have adopted while collecting.

I do not flatter myself that I have any china of extraordinary value, but the reader will gather from the photographs that, taken as a whole, I have found something worth looking for. Being wishful that the amateur may derive assistance from my book I have arranged several groups as specimens of various factories, and although the photographs can give only a poor idea of the colours, yet the style of decoration and the shapes may be some guide. I have succeeded in obtaining a black background by making use of the bookcase on the bureau, which gave me a side light. I am glad to say that all the handling, moving from place to place, fixing on wire stands, arranging on the shelves, shifting from one position to another, taking down and getting back into their respective quarters has been achieved without a chip. Beyond the annoyance of having to arrange a grouping twice, owing to an oversight which was not discovered until some days after the first negative had been taken, the photography was interesting, and I hope the result will be so to the reader, who is recommended to use a magnifying glass.

BOW (PLATE XL)

I have drawn my bow at a venture in getting this bag and my first shot brought in a saucer pronounced "Worcester" which I found had an impressed Bow workman's mark; next I potted a saucer which was so thick and heavy that I thought it was all pot; then came in sight the teapot sold as "Worcester," Dr. Wall period, and soon after I got a small bowl, strange to say flying under the same false colours. Other stray shots account for the odd handle-less cups. All these are hand-painted in blue, and as they vary in shade and hardness of paste they have been very entertaining. The tea-caddy on which I placed a small cup inverted, and two cups with saucers are painted in red, blue and gold. I have already spoken of my large bowl, the bowl with green decoration, sauce-boat, fretted bon-bon tray and basket pattern dish, so I need not again refer to them.

CHELSEA (PLATE XXXIX)

I fancy the two cups hand-decorated in red were among the first pieces made, and I wonder what has become of the saucers for they would be so thick they would not be likely to be broken except by a twentieth-century washer-up. I have three large plates, two of which were sold as Oriental, while the other was exchanged for a remark about the weather and half a crown. The two small plates were "certainly Lowestoft." The fine cup I found at Dunbar, and strange to say I picked out a saucer to match it at a South-

Old China.

Shelf 4. Worcester, Caughley.
,, 3. ,, ,,
,, 2. Lowestoft.
,, 1. Bow.

PLATE XL.

Old China.

Shelf 4. Turner Jug, Newhall, Chinese, Newhall.
,, 3. Liverpool, Davenport Jug, Worcester.
,, 2. Swansea, Nantgarw.
,, 1. Plates : Coalport, Minton, Worcester, Coalport. Cups and Saucers : Minton, Leeds, Bristol, Rockingham, Pinxton.

PLATE XLI.

port shop a few days later. Here I also bought the little vase as Oriental, and at the next antique shop I visited I was kindly furnished with an Oriental lid which fitted, thus completing the picture in a way. The Chelsea painting is exquisite, yet the whole does not bear careful scrutiny. Still the two make handy examples of hard and soft paste. The odd cup dates between the cups already spoken of. The small figure of Cupid holding a shell for sweets completes the group, but an early bowl will be found on Plate xv.

LOWESTOFT (PLATE XL)

Before you set out to collect Lowestoft it would be as well if you learned something about it, for as no marks are known of in connection therewith it makes a most convenient name to conjure with. I have had all sorts of stuff offered to me as Lowestoft. After I had coached myself up I rambled out one day to endeavour to make a start and you will scarcely credit it but at the first shop I came to I was successful. After going through the china that was visible I worked my way to the back where I found a few plates and odds and ends jumbled together, and after turning them over came across the pair of small blue hand-painted plates shown. I was told the plates had been in the window ever so long, but as nobody wanted them I could have them for a shilling each. I have found the other two odd plates quite at haphazard, and they were treated as just ordinary old ware by people who have not sunk deep into the mysteries of porcelain and glazing. Three cups and a saucer in blue, also a cup

and saucer with basket and garland floral decoration in colours, make up the lot after including the teapot to which I have already alluded as probably one of the earliest pieces, owing to the way in which the design had run causing its smudged appearance. The handle-less cup may be Longton Hall.

BRISTOL

To the group Shelf 3, Plate XLII, I think it worth while to call special attention. To begin with I invested one shilling on the handle-less cup blue and gold, marked "T," and I concluded this identified it with Tebo and Bristol; next I was sold the blue-and-white coffee cup marked with crossed swords and guaranteed "Worcester"; then I bought the spill-holder with crossed swords. All these at different times and places. Later I spotted a dirty teapot, with no mark and no gilt, which when washed looked well. It was evidently closely related to the coffee-cup in decoration and age, and was undoubtedly old Bristol. Then my faith in the "T" mark wavered, and when a few days after I saw a feeding-cup which appeared new, and which on handling revealed the "T" again, I began to feel cheap. Anyway, this settled the doubt I had in my mind and convinced me that while I had found an old Bristol piece which had copied the Dresden mark I had been deceived by "Dresden" faking the old Bristol mark. I show the two wastrels alongside the absolutes to illustrate my perplexity; certainly the soft paste, hand decoration, and very little gilt remaining helped to take me down. I wonder which of the copyists origin-

ated the design? "T" on this class has meant taboo since.

When the forger stops his forging
There won't be half the fun,
For the hunter bargain hunting
Stands less chance of being done.
It's just the doubt, when you are out,
That makes up half the game;
Without the fake, and chance you take,
The pastime would be tame.

The first Bristol cottage china teapot (Shelf 2) I discovered was on a shelf and as I lifted it down I noticed the cross mark in red, and as no lid was in evidence I was charged one shilling. On wrapping it up I found the lid inside and called attention thereto, but was met with the remark "That makes no difference."

MINTON (SHELF I, PLATE XLI)

I am noticing this name because thereby hangs a tale. While in a well-stocked shop I was charmed with a cup and saucer, which I examined and found impressed "Minton," together with the name of the artist, and dated 1864 in red. At the time of my find (1912), this artist had risen to the important position of Art Director at ——, and I wondered why he had gone to such trouble to please someone whose initials are worked into the design on the cup and saucer, and how it came to be sold to me with the remark, "Oh, that's only modern; you can have it for——" (so little), as it is hand painted with sweet delicacy. The plate is a typical example of hand-painted fruit, with the

border of turquoise blue. Further specimens are on Shelf I, Plate XLII, a Minton plate giving a Spanish noble's coat-of-arms in green, and a rather ordinary cup and saucer in pink and turquoise.

Owing to a very recent purchase just in time to be included in Plate XXXIII, Shelf I, there will be seen two Minton Plates; the one in the centre is pottery, is mainly hand painted in bright colours, one over the glaze, and impressed "Minton." That on the right is thick porcelain with one colour over the glaze, the outline of the design in black transfer, the colouring done by hand. I have had a pair of the latter some time, and the marked plate confirmed my opinion that they also came from the same factory, so I included one for the benefit of the reader, who will do well to study old Minton. Because— I have just been pulled up short when passing a shop which exhibited a large dish (20 in. by 15½ in.), having been struck by its almost dazzling decoration and its perfect condition. I found it bore no maker's mark, but as I had Minton's style in my mind's eye, I bought it in a hurry as pottery. Now I have time to examine it at home I find it is excellent porcelain, translucent throughout, although it weighs 6½ lb. It is the largest piece of china I have and the most brilliant in colouring, which is all hand painted, being touched up here and there with dark brown for a finishing effect after glazing. There is enough work on this dish to keep a "Ca' Canny" artist (did such exist) toiling for a week. It is a greatly glorified edition of the marked plate, and it is just in time to be too late to photograph, as this is my final haul

before going to press. Here is another proof of my previous remark that " You never know your luck when collecting," but I must add that your fortune may be considerably influenced by the knowledge you have acquired. You should first of all make up your mind where you want to go, and ascertain the best way to " get there," as there are many pitfalls on the road. The six plates referred to have been found at five different places (the pair 100 miles away) ; and as to the cost, well, that is a detail which might depreciate the descriptive notes.

SWANSEA (PLATE XLI)

I must say a few words about this group, as second on the left is a jug which represents my first purchase in old china. I knew nothing about the subject, and when later I discovered its mark " Woodbine " denoted that the piece emanated from Swansea, and that it was actually mentioned in a book, it set me thinking, and I decided to enter for the China Stakes. I have gathered in other Swansea representatives, none of them of a really uncommon type. Four in the centre are lustre decoration, but no one I have come in contact with has been aware that it was all Swansea, so possibly the photograph may be of avail to more than one curious reader. I am well aware that the really artistic Swansea is considered of great value, but the fact that I have no specimens of this class does not keep me awake o' nights. The jug on the right is Nantgarw.

BLUE DRAGON (PLATE XL)

I had a remarkable experience one morning when I was staying at a seaside town. I turned out to see what I could find, and visited all likely shops. In one where the stock was mostly modern I was told they had no old china, but for some reason I opened a drawer near the door and lifted out a blue dragon bowl bearing an old Worcester mark. They had forgotten all about it, and seemed almost as pleased as I was at the discovery, which ended in a mutual bargain. In another street at a shop where they were giving up business, and only had a little stock left, I saw another blue dragon bowl the same size, marked 4s. 6d. When I got home I removed the price ticket and was shocked when an imitation Chinese mark was revealed proving it to be very early Caughley. No blue dragons or blue devils have since crossed my path, but if I do meet with any green dragons on cups I will see if I cannot make them agree with some which are portrayed on the two early Coalport saucers I show on Plate XLI.

WORCESTER (SHELVES 3 AND 4, PLATE XL)

Reader, I have now brought you to Worcester, which you know is a Sauce-y as well as a Saucer-y place, but that should not influence our careful study of some of its products which appeal to me effectively. There is something so reposeful about the blue-and-white old Worcester china, mellow with age, and soothing with its smoothness, combined with a warmth of feeling, that has ofttimes affected me. When reaching

the stage of jadedness after a long ramble, when the results have been up to that point disappointing, I have felt quite revived after treating myself to a taste of Worcester Sauce. You see the variety of articles, wine cup, egg-cup, sweetmeat dish, teapot, cups and saucers —but I wish to call your special attention to the small jug. I saw one very like this recently fitted with a lid, and marked with a crescent, which the dealer said denoted either Worcester or Caughley, and the price was four guineas. As my jug has no mark I call it "Worcester." The cup and saucer, lotus pattern bear the 1862 mark.

Shelf 3, Plate XLI, coloured and printed Worcester. I bought the English Japanese mask jug, as I was struck with its doubtful beauty, especially as it had only part of the handle. Later it took a journey to London, and returned after a lengthy absence fitted with the artificial limb which, as it has not been put to use since, has proved most satisfactory.

With regard to the coloured cream jug, on one of my cycling rambles I unexpectedly came across an emporium, stocked with a legion of antiques, which I entered, after dismounting of course. Being a beginner I was much bewildered, and was backing out without buying when I was hypnotised by the glare of the proprietor's gaze, so I grabbed the most strikingly coloured thing that struck my eye, put down half a crown, and scorched away with what I have since discovered to be a piece of old Worcester of a type which is in great demand. I got to know the man fairly well later, and if he had sudden fits of uncontrollable temper at intervals his lungs were O. K., and fitted him for the role of local

politician. He did a big trade, and if I caught him in his shirt with his trousers fastened up by his braces tied round him I anticipated we could do business; but on occasions when I found him got up in print shirt-sleeves and a black velveteen waistcoat then I knew he was expecting wealthy clients and I had better call again. His knowledge of marks was somewhat limited, and I wondered why his price always seemed high after I had examined the bottom of a piece; and that he never said what he wanted until he had taken the thing from me and satisfied himself if it had a mark or not. When I tumbled to his game, if I caught sight of a mark I had to put that piece back hurriedly and pick it up again casually just before leaving, this being a case of paste cutting a rough diamond.

Lastly I come to my first little bit of Worcester. You will no doubt have heard of Dr. Wall, who really created this china; if not, you can read him up, when you will find he took a great interest in Malvern, so it is not surprising that on this mug there is a view of Malvern. Judging by the scene it must be a very early production, more especially as the printing is over the glaze. Every collector seems to be out for reminiscences of Dr. Wall, and I once came in contact with a dealer who labelled most of his Worcester "Dr. Wal period." On my pointing out the error in the spelling he remarked, "I see—that makes a L of a difference!"

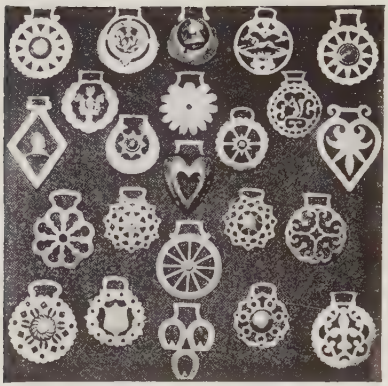
NEWHALL

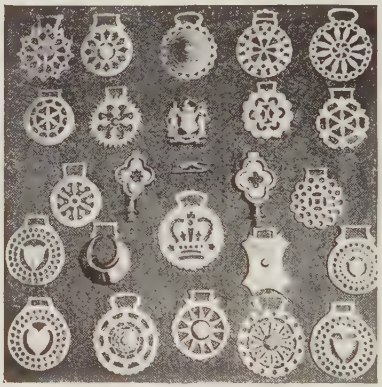
It is often hard to tell a certain class of Newhall from Bristol common or cottage china, and Newhall seems to have turned out many qualities of work without

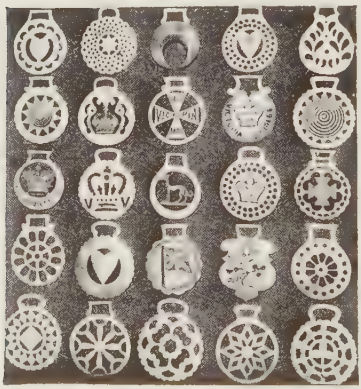
Old China.

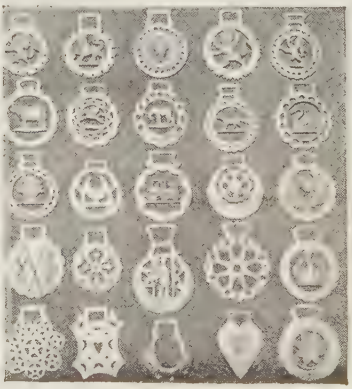
Shelf 4. French Porcelain.
,, 3. Newhall (3), Plymouth Cup, Bristol Saucer, Mug and Teapot, "Dresden" Duds (2).
,, 2. Bristol Cottage China.
,, 1. Plates: Minton, Worcester, Chamberlain's Worcester, Cups and Saucers: Minton, Leeds, Caughley, Newhall.

PLATE XLII.









Old Horse Amulets. Group 1.

PLATE XLIII.

using any mark. The only pieces I have which are marked are the bowl on " Grandfather Helm " and the teapot in Plate XLII, Shelf 3.

In regard to the bowl I am about to reveal a secret known to very few outside my own family circle. The bowl was given (not thrown) in with several other things I had bought, as it had a piece broken out. It is gaudily painted inside, and having the letter " N " on the bottom I determined to make the most of it. I had a wooden block cut, grooved to just fit the jagged edge when the bowl was on its side, and fitted with a back support which took in the bottom, then a piece of wire holds the bowl always in position. This is a bit of camouflage that has only been noticed by one collector visitor, and the bowl has often been admired. On the top shelf, Plate XLI, you will see two teapots very similar in decoration, the practically perfect one is Newhall and soft ; the other, without a handle, is Chinese and very hard. I bought the latter to demonstrate how nearly the English artist copied the Oriental, but the faces always give the show away ; the fact is, you cannot make a Chinese mug out of an English face. When I bought this broken pot the following remarks were exchanged :

" I never thought anyone would be soft enough to buy that thing."

" Ah ! but I collect teapots without handles ; then they cannot be broken off when they are used at home."

" But how can they pour the tea out when it's hot ? "

" Pump it out with a strainer."

" How ? "

" Now you are pumping. If you get any more without handles, will you save them for me ? Good day."

DERBY (SHELF 4, PLATE XXXIX)

The cup and saucer on the right are richly decorated in heavy gold only, and are marked. Those at the left end are painted with rural scenery, and I was surprised to find they were Derby. The part-set of handsome Crown Derby will be easily identified by the typical handwork, which is of good early production.

SPODE (SHELVES 2 AND 3, PLATE XXXIX)

I give several specimens representing this prolific factory, and although none of them is marked, I feel sure they are correctly classified. There is a substantial portion of a family tea service of old Spode on the third shelf, to which I have added some cups and saucers of the same design, but whiter in the body. These all have the well-known Mandarin design as decoration with the typical bright green in evidence. The teapot, sugar bowl, and specimen cups and saucers on the shelf below call for no special comment.

LEEDS

I give on Shelf 1, Plate XLI, a charming specimen of some cups and saucers printed in maroon and gilt, and on Shelf 1, Plate XLII, a blue-and-white cup and saucer bearing a square imitation Chinese mark. On "Grandfather Phillips," Plate III, there is an example of old Leeds pottery, hand painted in blue, with an early Oriental design. I was in doubt where this bowl emanated from, but I am now convinced it is Leeds, for

I have just bought a perfect rich blue-and-white Leeds Queen's ware coffee pot of similar design and glaze. It has a twin twisted handle with flower knob, and cost less than the price of this book. A basket-pattern dish in fine condition appears on Plate XV.

FRENCH PORCELAIN

At the head of Plate XLII you will see a covered pot-pourri jar and a pair of 8-inch beakers, together with two mugs. I found four of these things at Folkestone, while one mug, with the coat-of-arms of the Earl of Arundel worked into the decoration, I got in Kendal. When I was in Folkestone in 1912 I was hopelessly puzzled as to what this stuff could be. In another shop I had examined a bowl of the same make bearing an imitation Chinese mark, and as up to then I had learnt that only English china was soft—which all these pieces were—I could not understand were it came from. After comparing notes with Mr. J. F. Blacker, who had previously written me very kindly when answering my queries, I felt satisfied it was made in France of a soft quality to suit the English market. The decoration is by hand, and is a mixture between Chelsea and Oriental design. Lots of this stuff has been called Lowestoft, and about that time in an up-to-date shop I saw something like it which I felt sure had not long come over from the Continent. Soon after this holiday I was asked to call at a house near home to look at two "Lowestoft" vases which had just been sent them, and I found they were similar modern Continental. I believe my specimens are about a hundred years old.

SEVENTH COURSE

Old Horse Amulets

A Poor Start—Castings—Tips—Duplicates—Photographs—A Puzzle—My only Son—Our last Tour.

I HAVE now reached a course which I am afraid I shall not find easy-going. My attention was first drawn to horse amulets or face brasses in an article in the *Connoisseur* for October, 1911, but it was not until 1913, when I came in touch with the proprietor of an antique shop who had dabbled in these things for some time, and who obligingly talked to me about them, that I decided I would add a few to my collection, as they might be interesting and would occupy small space. My first purchases resulted in my bringing home on approval quite a number which I had obtained from a dealer, who informed me that the brasses were usually collected in pairs. I referred this find to the friendly antique proprietor, who, after looking them through, asked if I had paid for them, and he said it in such a way that I evaded the question by enquiring " Why ? " His answer was, " Because there are several stamped pieces, and you should only buy cast ones ; besides, what do you want pairs for ? "

This seemed rather a poor start, but I was taught early in life to make difficulties stepping-stones to success, so I returned the amulets not approved of, and

later received desirable specimens in exchange. The next step was to learn how to detect those that were cast, and I found they usually had a couple of points or studs apparent at the back corresponding with the holes in the moulds through which the molten metal had been run. Further, all stamped pieces are punched out of a sheet of brass, the same thickness throughout, the back of which is practically as smooth as the front. I have about half a dozen not cast and not stamped, but fretted by hand.

Next I had to ascertain how to tell old from modern. That can usually be arrived at by the appearance of wear, while the old type are more highly finished and better metal was used in their manufacture. I was soon made aware of the fact that new "old" pieces were being made, as they were constantly cropping up. The ambition of the collector evidently should be to get together as many varieties as possible, leaving the duplicates for other buyers; but as soon as my curiosity was aroused I bought all the old castings I came across.

To anyone who makes a special study of signs and symbols these patterns and designs must be very fascinating, and the collecting thereof should appeal forcibly to those with enquiring minds whose fancies tend in that direction.

As it was quite impossible to get together a collection by my usual method of looking out for myself, I secured the assistance of two kindly travellers who went in all directions in connection with their ordinary business. They took great interest in my requirement, and bought up all the old brass cast specimens they could find, with

the result that I became possessed of many duplicates, some of which I disposed of, whilst through the courtesy of a correspondent who readily exchanged the remainder, I was able to raise the number of my different specimens to about four hundred.

I found these amulets made very interesting groups for photography, and as fast as I procured a fresh two dozen I hung them by strong pins on a bridge table, which I placed on its side on a dining-table, and so was enabled to make an easy job. I was quite keen up to a point on doing this, but the bottom seemed to drop out of the business soon after the war started, though not before I had taken quite a number of photographs. In the hope they will interest many readers, I give two plates reduced from twelve of my best negatives, which will show enough amulets for anyone to be going on with. One collector informed me he knew of over one thousand designs, and no doubt there are many more, so there is ample scope, but my experience is that old specimens are very hard to find.

I am now going to put a puzzle before you, and hope it may be somewhat entertaining. The fact is, one of the amulets is a fake. It occupies a central position on one of the twelve photographs reproduced. I conceived the idea when the spirit of mischief was upon me, and with the assistance of a mechanic and a little solder, a very common piece was made into a very rare specimen. It was specially remarked upon by another collector to whom I sent my photographs as the only one of the kind he had seen. Which is it ?

I remember showing this jokingly to my son, and

his characteristic comment was, "That's jolly good; but I say, dad, is it playing the game?"

In the spring of 1914 my son took me in his sidecar for a tour which lasted one happy week, one day of which now comes forcibly to my mind. That we started back from Henley-on-Thames in pouring rain made no difference to his equable temper, and before we reached Oxford the sun was as bright as his disposition. When we turned at Whitney and passed over the Cotswolds *en route* for the Wye Valley, we came across the scenery in which he revelled, and here he and I found a few old amulets in a saddler's shop while waiting for the wayside lunch. In peace and quietness his true bent lay, and only his regard for duty impelled him to join the Army when volunteers were appealed for. His commission was dated on his twenty-first birthday, and it was the irony of fate that the last two years of his clean life should have been spent in the grime and stress and turmoil of war. Thus I lost my lovable companion, who for nearly ten years had played such a charming part in assisting to make my collecting a pastime.

FINAL COURSE

Sheffield Plate and Old Silver
Told by the Plateau

I HAVE been asked to act as spokesman for this group and as it is in the customary order of things, not only for every group but for each individual, to have a grievance and air it, I must first of all protest against the indignity of placing my companions and myself at the rear of the book, when our value and appearance justify our occupying the premier position, and we consider it a great slight on the estimation in which we are held by real connoisseurs that we have been allotted a back setting while things like old pewter, for which we have the utmost contempt, have been allocated to the forefront. Now that I am on my feet I will say a few words respecting my associates and myself, and considering that my age and reflections extend over a century, I hope they will be followed with some regard. I get on very well with the Tankard, but there are times when he gets out of hand. On one of these unruly outbursts he addressed me as "Centrepiece," but I metaphorically put his lid on by calling him "a mug." Taking him all round, he is not a bad specimen, and undoubtedly has sprung from a good family, although I have heard

that he latterly came out of a pawnshop for half a sovereign.

My friends the candlesticks might assist me considerably in my reflections, but their glory has been snuffed out since coming here, and on no occasion have they served any useful purpose, whereas if their telescopic action was brought into play and their proper office as candle-bearers to a distinguished specimen bearing the aristocratic title of " Tableau " was allotted to them, they would undoubtedly throw more light on this subject.

The cake-basket is the silent member of our select clique, but I learnt that it had served a fine family for some generations, when it was presented to a church bazaar. From there it passed into the warm hands of the late donor to our present owner. In my opinion this is a case of overfretting.

The sugar-tongs and butter-knife are quite unobtrusive, but are of sterling worth. They often indulge in punctilious conversation which usually becomes more animated in the afternoon about tea-time, when they often refer to a family of Spoons—the Tea Spoons, I believe. On these occasions Mr. Knife lays the butter on rather thickly, which Miss Tongs in her sweet way appears to look upon as quite the correct thing. Only on her arrival here in company with the Cream Jug have I seen them upset, and I gathered that they had all their lives been accustomed to the troy weight which jewellers use, but owing to the vicissitudes of their recent experience they had fallen into the hands of a broker, who, when he parted with them, dumped them

into the scales which were guaranteed to weigh correctly up to 14 lb. avoirdupois, and which had just been used for dirty pewter and called them " half a crown an ounce."

The Cream Jug keeps himself to himself, and is taciturn, at times turning to sourness. He suffers from swelled head occasionally, and then says things about " hall-marks " and " helmet shape," but he always carries himself well. We call the Toddy ladle " Euclid," because he is length without breadth, but he doesn't mind. He has had jovial times in the past, and says if he were to tell me some of the tales he has heard when he was kept busy at nights that I should crack my mirror. He loves to lie on me with his face downwards, as then he can see it in the glass, and I will say I have seldom seen a nicer.

As regards myself, I could fill a volume with the interesting events I have witnessed and the conversations I have heard, but the space placed at my disposal is so meagre I will limit my disclosures to the last few years of my existence. Owing to circumstances over which I had no control, after a lengthy period of neglect I was condemned to occupy an undignified position in a broker's window, where the odour of paraffin was most repulsive to my susceptibilities. I was dozing in the dark one evening when I heard a voice inquiring, " Have you any pewter ? " and the reply, " There is a thing in the window, but I think it has some copper about it." Some money changed hands, I was wrapped in soiled paper and carried to this home, where I was shocked to see a lot of horrid pewter in the hall and

elsewhere, and I was introduced to the family in this way, "I don't know what it is, but it is juicy heavy."

These people treated me with an attention I had not been accustomed to for many years, and after giving my frame a bath and a polish, refitting my mirror top and screwing my mahogany back, promoted me to the drawing-room, where no pewter was permitted to enter, and here I have since remained. I am convinced I never looked better, and they went into ecstasies over my grape and vine leaves border decoration, and I then had my photograph taken for the first time in my life. Being a great advocate of cleanliness, and as the same care was bestowed on my appearance in my early days as now, I was quite in accord with the lady who remarked, "She thought that in all well-managed houses the carpets ought to be taken up and beaten at least once a year."

Do you know I love old furniture, and on occasions when there is a general dust up in the drawing-room I am walked past an elm dresser on which I have caught sight of a pair of Sheffield plate snuffers. I have cut them dead, as I notice they have so far demeaned themselves as to form an unholy alliance with a despicable pewter tray.

I had an uneventful period until the leaves were falling in 1918, when a young captain in khaki arrived straight from the firing line in France on leave for a fortnight. The next few days I am proud to say I had to bear the weight of a large wedding cake, and on the eventful day I trembled when the bride began to cut it with

the captain assisting her, but my old back, which is as strong as ever, bore up bravely. There was much talking on that occasion, but the words which most impressed me—and which, in order that I may apply them to my patient readers, shall be my last—were

"HEALTH, WEALTH, AND HAPPINESS."

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